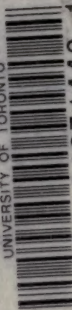


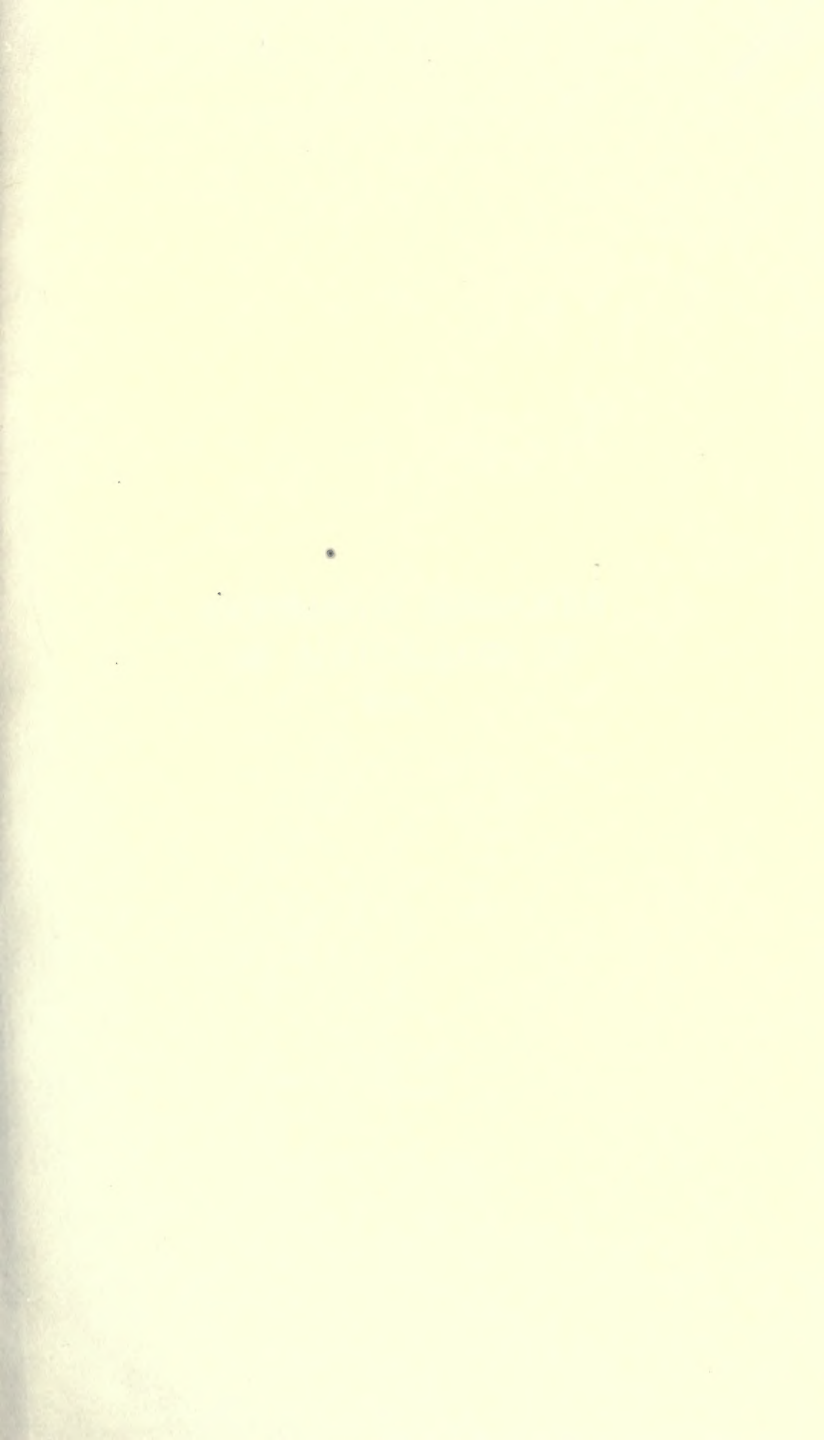
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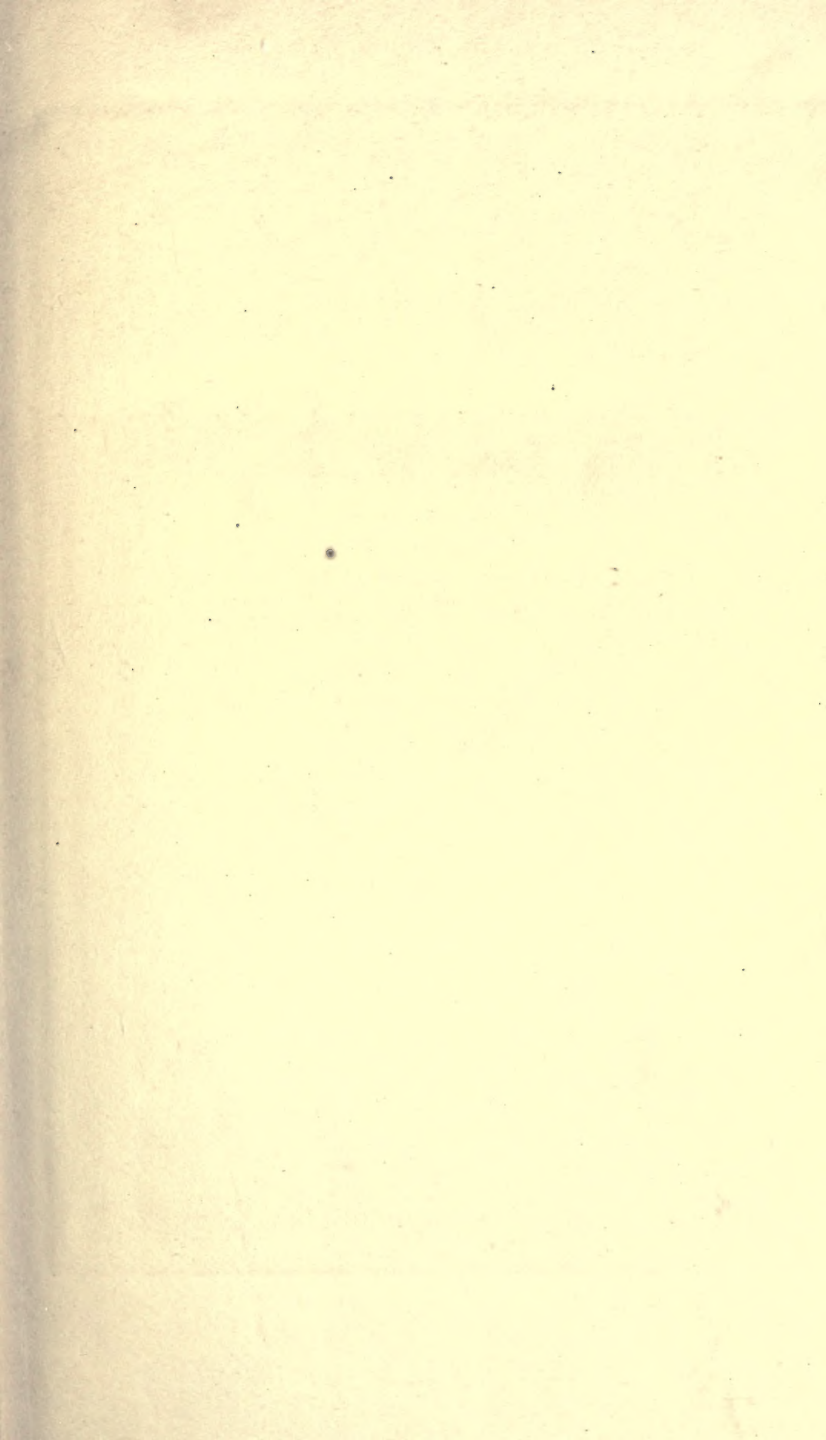
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**INTIMATE MEMOIRS  
OF NAPOLEON III**

**VOL. I**









*Napoleon III.*

*from an unpublished original drawing by H. Viger.*

# INTIMATE MEMOIRS OF NAPOLEON III

PERSONAL REMINISCENCES OF  
THE MAN AND THE EMPEROR

BY THE LATE  
BARON D'AMBÈS

EDITED AND TRANSLATED BY  
A. R. ALLINSON, M.A.

WITH ILLUSTRATIONS FROM THE  
COLLECTION OF A. M. BROADLEY

IN TWO VOLUMES  
VOL. I

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## TRANSLATOR'S FOREWORD

THE book here presented to the English public is the private diary of a lifelong and intimate friend of Napoleon III. The Baron d'Ambès, as the diarist chooses to call himself, first made the acquaintance of the future Emperor when scarcely more than a boy at Arenaberg, the Swiss home where he and his mother, Queen Hortense of Holland, were living in exile. Deeply impressed with the personality of Louis Napoléon, he began from the date of his earliest association with his hero jotting down incidents, conversations and reflections as they occurred—a habit he maintained to the end of a long life. To these he added evidence from every source bearing on his subject—letters, documents, newspaper cuttings, which, after the Emperor's death and within a few years of his own, he sorted and prepared for publication.

The book therefore supplies an enormous mass of first-hand material for a survey and study of the life and character of one of the most enigmatic figures in modern history. The Baron follows his hero from boyhood through the years of exile and adventure—as a conspirator in Italy, as a prisoner at Ham, as a refugee in London, as President of the Republic of 1848, finally as Emperor, down to the disasters of 1870, the fatal day of Sedan and the death at Chislehurst. In every phase of that chequered career this unique diary throws illuminating

sidelights on a vast number of interesting and hitherto imperfectly understood episodes.

The thanks of the translator and publishers are due to MM. Charles Simond and M.-C. Poinsot, the joint editors of the original Memoirs in French, for kind assistance courteously given ; also to Mr. A. M. Broadley for his liberality in allowing them to illustrate the work from his unrivalled collection of prints and autographs.

# CONTENTS

## OF VOL. I

	PAGE
TRANSLATOR'S FOREWORD . . . . .	5
CHRONOLOGICAL TABLE OF EVENTS . . . . .	11
PREFACE, BY THE EDITORS. . . . .	15
POSTSCRIPT : . . . . .	19
INTRODUCTION, BY THE BARON D'AMBÈS . . . . .	21

## PART I

### YOUTH AND EARLY MANHOOD; EXILE AND CONSPIRATOR

#### CHAPTER

I. WAS LOUIS NAPOLÉON THE SON OF HIS FATHER? . . . . .	25
II. BIRTH AND CHILDHOOD—1807—1815 . . . . .	46
III. BOYHOOD AND YOUTH; ARENABERG, 1815—1830. . . . .	64
IV. NAPOLEON A "CARBONARO" IN ITALY—1830, 1831 . . . . .	72
V. IMPERIAL AMBITIONS; THE BARON D'AMBÈS FIRST MAKES THE FUTURE EMPEROR'S ACQUAINTANCE—1831—1833 . . . . .	80
VI. DAYS OF EXILE IN SWITZERLAND; MOËSA . . . . .	90
VII. "L'AFFAIRE DE STRASBOURG"—OCTOBER 30TH, 1836 . . . . .	101
VIII. NAPOLEON IN AMERICA; DEATH OF QUEEN HORTENSE . . . . .	118
IX. SWITZERLAND AGAIN . . . . .	127

CHAPTER	PAGE
X. THE PRINCE IN LONDON . . . . .	136
XI. "L'AFFAIRE DE BOULOGNE"—AUGUST 1840	145
XII. BROUGHT TO TRIAL . . . . .	153
XIII. THE PRISONER OF HAM . . . . .	159
XIV. ESCAPE ; IN LONDON AGAIN . . . . .	171
XV. REVOLUTION OF '48 . . . . .	185
XVI. THE PRINCE ELECTED PRESIDENT OF THE FRENCH REPUBLIC—DECEMBER 10TH, 1848	206

## PART II

### THE PRINCE-PRESIDENT

I. AFTER THE "PLÉBISCITE" . . . . .	221
II. SUMMER OF 1849 . . . . .	237
III. PARLIAMENTARY OPPOSITION—1849—1851	247
IV. OCCUPATION OF ROME—1848, 1849 . . . . .	264
V. PRESIDENTIAL PROGRESSES—1849, 1850, 1851 . . . . .	271
VI. PREPARATIONS FOR THE "COUP D'ÉTAT"; THE COMTE DE MORNAY . . . . .	284
VII. THE "COUP D'ÉTAT"—DECEMBER 1ST, 1851	294
VIII. DICTATORSHIP—JANUARY 1852 . . . . .	315
IX. DICTATORSHIP ( <i>continued</i> ) . . . . .	330
X. DICTATORSHIP : LATER DAYS . . . . .	337
XI. DICTATORSHIP : LATER DAYS ( <i>continued</i> ) . . . . .	347
XII. EVE OF THE EMPIRE . . . . .	358
XIII. THE EMPIRE ESTABLISHED—DECEMBER 2ND, 1852 . . . . .	367
XIV. CELEBRITIES . . . . .	377
XV. REFLECTIONS . . . . .	394



## LIST OF ILLUSTRATIONS

NAPOLEON III. (photogravure)	. . .	<i>Frontispiece</i>
		PAGE
BÉRANGER	. . . . .	33
LOUIS BONAPARTE, KING OF HOLLAND	. . . . .	33
NAPOLEON ON HORSEBACK IN LONDON	. . . . .	51
From Count d'Orsay's sketch of 1840.		
QUEEN HORTENSE	. . . . .	51
From a contemporary print.		
THE EMPRESSES EUGÉNIE AND JOSÉPHINE AND QUEEN HORTENSE	. . . . .	69
From a print of 1854—"Les Anges de la France."		
MALMAISON, FROM THE SEINE	. . . . .	104
CARICATURES OF BARON HAUSSMANN AND OF DR. CONNEAU		121
AUTOGRAPH LETTER OF NAPOLÉON-LOUIS BONAPARTE, ELDER BROTHER OF NAPOLEON III.	. . . . .	139
In the collection of A. M. Broadley, Esq.		
THE BOULOGNE PROCLAMATION	. . . . .	139
From an original copy in the collection of A. M. Broadley, Esq.		
CHÂTEAU DE HAM, 1835	. . . . .	173
COUNT D'ORSAY	. . . . .	195
LADY BLESSINGTON	. . . . .	209
"LE RETOUR DE L'AIGLE": NAPOLEONIC SONG OF 1848, 1849	. . . . .	243
CARICATURE OF NAPOLEON III.	. . . . .	261
CARICATURE OF PIERRE BONAPARTE	. . . . .	261

	PAGE
PALACE AND GARDENS OF SAINT-CLOUD . . . . .	279
CARICATURE PORTRAIT OF THIERS AS THE NAPOLEON OF THE VENDÔME COLUMN . . . . .	313
NAPOLEON III. . . . .	313
From the sketch of Count d'Orsay.	
CARICATURES OF M. ROUHER AND OF PRINCE NAPOLEON .	331
COMPIÈGNE, FROM THE GARDENS . . . . .	349
LAMARTINE . . . . .	383
From an engraving by Pollet.	
GUIZOT . . . . .	383

*The facsimile of the signature of Napoleon III.  
used upon the binding has been taken from an  
original letter kindly lent by Messrs. Maggs Bros.*

## CHRONOLOGICAL TABLE OF EVENTS

1808. April 20 . Birth of Louis Napoléon Bonaparte in the Rue Cerutti, Paris.
- 1810 . . . Abdication of Louis Bonaparte, King of Holland.
1814. April 11 . Treaty of Fontainebleau; deposition of Napoleon I.
1815. March 2-June 18. The "Hundred Days"; Waterloo and second exile of Napoleon I.
1815. July 19 . Queen Hortense expelled from France; takes refuge in Switzerland.
- 1815-36 . . . Boyhood and youth in exile.  
Augsburg, Thun, and Arenaberg.
- 1821-23 . . . Publication of the *Mémorial de Sainte-Hélène* by Las Cases.
1830. July . Revolution; Charles X. deposed.
- 1830, 1831 . . . Adventures as "Carbonaro" in Italy; death of his elder brother.
1832. July 22 . Death of the Duke of Reichstadt; Louis Napoléon head of the Napoleon family.
1833. Aug. . The author first meets Louis Napoléon at Arenaberg.
1836. Oct. 30 . Strassburg attempt; deported to America.
1839. Oct. 5 . Death of Queen Hortense.
- 1837, 1838 . . . In Switzerland again.
- Dec. 1838-Aug. 1840. First residence in London.
1840. Aug. . Boulogne attempt; trial and imprisonment at Ham.  
Dec. 15 . Remains of Napoleon I. removed to the Invalides.
- 1840-46 . . . Imprisonment at Ham.
1846. May 25 . Escape.
- 1846-48 . . . Second residence in London.
1848. Feb. . Revolution; Louis Philippe overthrown; Louis Napoléon to Paris; elected to the Constituent Assembly.
- Dec. 10 . *Plébiscite*; elected President of the French Republic.

## 12 CHRONOLOGICAL TABLE OF EVENTS

1849. . . *Émeute* in Paris (June 13).  
Occupation of Rouen by French troops.
- 1849, 1850, 1851 Difficulties and disputes with Chambers.
1851. Dec. 1 . *Coup d'État*.
- 1852 . . . Dictator.  
*Second plébiscite*.
- Dec. 2 . Proclaimed Emperor as Napoleon III.
1853. Jan. 30 . Marriage.  
Plots against the Emperor's life.
- Oct. . Court at Compiègne for first time.
1854. Jan., Feb. Pourparlers with Russia.
- March 1854–Dec. 1855. Crimean War.
1854. July 12 . The Emperor at Boulogne.  
Battles of the Alma (Sept. 20); Balaclava (Oct. 25);  
Inkerman (Nov. 5).
1855. April 16–22. Emperor and Empress visit England.  
Exposition Universelle at Paris.  
Queen of England visits Paris.
- April 28 and Sept. 10. Attempts of Pianori and Delman on  
Emperor's life.
- Sept. 8 . Taking of Sebastopol.
- 1856 . . . Apogee of the Empire.
- March 16 Birth of the Prince Imperial.
- Autumn . Great Floods in the Provinces.
1857. Jan. 3 . Assassination of Monseigneur Sibour, Archbishop  
of Paris.  
Haussman created a Baron.
- June 13 . Attempt of Tebaldi and Bertolini on Emperor's  
life.
- June 19 . Elections to Legislative Assembly.
1858. June 14 . Attempt of Orsini.
- Aug. . Emperor and Empress visit Normandy and  
Brittany.  
Queen of England at Cherbourg.
1859. . . War in Italy.  
Battles of Montebello (May 20), Magenta  
(June 4), Solferino (June 24).  
Convention of Villa Franca.
1860. March . Annexation of Savoy and Nice.  
Chinese War—Sack of Summer Palace; battle of  
Palikao; Treaty of Tien-tsin.  
Syrian Expedition.
1861. . . A year of peace and prosperity.



# CHRONOLOGICAL TABLE OF EVENTS 13

1861-70 . . .	Gradual decline of the Empire ; Napoleon persists in his rôle of despotic ruler.
1862-67 . . .	Mexican imbroglio.
1862 . . .	First interference in affairs of Mexico. Prussian unrest ; preparing for war.
1863 . . .	Hotly contested elections.
June . . .	Resignation of Persigny Ministry ; Rouher succeeds.
1864 . . .	Armed intervention in Mexico.
May 28 . . .	Maximilian leads at Vera Cruz. Emperor visits Vichy for first time.
1865. Feb. 28 . . .	Emperor's <i>Histoire de Jules César</i> (vol. i.) published.
March 10 . . .	Death of the Comte de Morny.
1866 . . .	Austro-Prussian War, ending with Sadowa (Königgrätz), July 3. Emperor and Empress at Biarritz and Compiègne.
1867 . . .	Second Exposition Universelle.
July 19 . . .	Maximilian shot at Queretaro (Mexico).
1868 . . .	The Emperor in ill-health. Tragic interview with Empress Charlotte (Maximilian's widow) at Saint-Cloud.
1869 . . .	European complications increasing.
1870 . . .	Difficulties with Prussia ; Bismarck.
May 20 . . .	<u>Third plébiscite</u> .
Aug. . . .	War breaks out ; " À Berlin ! " Battles of Weissenburg (Aug. 4), Wörth, Spicheren (Aug. 6), Gravelotte (Aug. 18), Bazaine shut up in Metz.
Sept. 2 . . .	Sedan ; Napoleon surrenders with 83,000 men. Republic declared at Paris ; Empress and Prince Imperial fly to England.
1871 . . .	Napoleon joins them at Chislehurst.
March 1 . . .	Occupation of Paris.
May 10 . . .	Treaty of Frankfurt.
1872. Jan. . . .	Death at Chislehurst.



## PREFACE

THESE Memoirs, by an intimate friend of the Emperor's, who followed the latter's fortunes from the exile at Arenaberg to the exile at Chislehurst, form a collection of documents of first-rate historical importance and supply a mass of highly piquant details of the seamy side of the Second Empire ; they throw a new light on events which popular passions and prejudices have often distorted, and reveal once and for all the strange personality of the nephew of the Great Napoleon.

It is the first time any complete history of Napoleon III. of the sort has been published in French.

It is now some years ago that there died in Alsace a personage who played an important part under the Second Empire, although pretty much forgotten nowadays. A bosom-friend of Napoleon III. and very nearly of an age with the Emperor, he was able to exert an influence that on more than one occasion out-balanced the Duc de Morny's own. Deeply attached to the Prince, whom he had known ever since the far-off days when the latter, an exile at the Château of Arenaberg, used to ponder over the means of playing a part worthy of the great name he bore, he was not blind to the weaknesses of his Sovereign and his *entourage* ; but he considered him unfairly judged by his contemporaries—above all in later days, when in

retirement he put in order the notes and reminiscences which we now lay before the public.

For our present purpose we designate the author of these pages the Baron d'Ambès—a pseudonym that is indeed sufficiently obvious, the person who put this memorial in our hands having asked us to observe this much reticence for reasons which it does not behove us to gainsay. This in no wise diminishes the absorbing interest of these confidential papers,—a circle of official friends often disastrously chosen, an Empress sometimes unworthy of her task and a series of military reverses having given rise to severe criticisms on the Emperor's personal conduct, not to mention the fact that the historians of the time have more than once falsified the facts.

The pages that follow were written down without sequence or system—just as events befell, as documents became available ; they abound in facts hitherto unknown, in characteristic anecdotes, as full of vivid human interest as a novel ; they will destroy more than one legend and will present under a true light more than one aspect of the life and times of the Sovereign.

It should be noted, in this connection, that these Memoirs of the Baron d'Ambès quote extracts from the actual *Souvenirs de Napoléon III.*, written by the Prince himself. It is more than likely that other passages were inspired by him in his lifetime—notably during the time of exile, when his friend, who made a residence in England on several different occasions, saw a great deal of him.

Again, it should be remembered that the Empress Eugénie has in her possession private and personal documents which she has on certain occasions communicated in part to others ; for instance, to Blanchard Jerrold when he wrote his fine *Life of Napoleon III.* These documents, by the terms of her will, are not to be made public till



fifty years after the death of the lady who exercised so immediate an influence on the events of the Second Empire. At the same time we know that the Baron d'Ambès has reproduced in his writings many fragments of these much-talked-of papers.

Here, then, we have, from the hand of one who was, more or less, the Las Cases of the second twilight of the Napoleons, another Memorial, as authentic as the first, which chance has put in our possession, and which we should be justified in entitling the *Memorial of Chislehurst*, recalling the spot, Chislehurst, the St. Helena of a second Napoleon, where died the vanquished of Sedan.

The Baron's manuscript is highly original, both in matter and manner. We have completed the classification begun by the author ; we have even modified it, we admit, in places, to make the narrative clearer ; with this object our very first task was to bring together under separate chapters, each prefaced by a short list of subjects and bearing a general heading recalling the chief personage there dealt with, the scattered notes relating to the individual in question under widely separated dates.

The main interest of the book begins with the pages that go back to 1833, the year when the Baron d'Ambès first made Louis Napoléon's acquaintance at Arenaberg, since which date he follows up step by step, as it were, his fortunes.

It is in these opening chapters that the Baron's suggestive hypothesis is first broached : can it be that Napoleon III. was the son of Napoleon I., and not of Louis Bonaparte ? In later parts of the book unexpected sidelights are thrown on the Emperor, on his family, and on the great protagonists in the action of the period. Not a few mysteries are cleared up, important events explained, responsibilities laid on the right shoulders, secrets brought to light.

The Baron d'Ambès judges the facts from his point of view, but very often he merely records them. His Memoirs are not, in fact, either an apology or a criticism, but the unvarnished testimony of a witness who has had unrivalled opportunities of seeing, hearing, and knowing. Before his eyes, as before a glass, have passed all those who played their part in the events of the time, all the men who were the helpers and the hinderers, the favourers and the foes, of Napoleon III. before and after his accession to power. The Baron d'Ambès has traced with an impartial and accurate pencil all these figures, and depicted their features with perfect precision. His *Mémorial* may be compared with the famous *Journal des Goncourt*. It has the same importance, and will be read, we believe, with the same attention.

May these pages interest, as they have interested us, friends and enemies alike of Napoleon III., pique the curiosity of all, and thrill afresh those who have read the *Mémorial de Sainte-Hélène*, of which they form, so to speak, the sequel.

CH. SIMOND.

M. C. POINSOT.

## POSTSCRIPT

THE Memoirs of the Baron d'Ambès are, on the whole, a faithful record of the Second Empire and the Emperor's life from birth to death. He is a well-informed and always frank witness who chronicles from day to day what he has seen and heard. He jots down incidents, brings together all means of information, watches others' physiognomies, gives his own impressions, comments on current events, and judges actions and men with a complete independence of opinion and language. His Diary is neither a panegyric nor an indictment. Though devoted to Napoleon, he is no mere sycophant, neither does he steep his pen in gall like Saint-Simon nor follow blindly a prejudice erected into a fetish like Michelet. Reared in the Napoleonic creed, an Imperialist of yesterday, and an ardent adherent of to-morrow, he remains firmly convinced of the legitimacy of the cause, the success of which he first hopes for and foresees, presently salutes the triumph and at last deploras the overthrow. Never a courtier, he remains, after Napoleon ascends the Imperial Throne, a voluntary recluse from the honours and dignities which he might have won, like so many others, merely by condescending to solicit them. He confines himself to the part of a careful observer whom nothing of consequence escapes and whose only wish is to be the faithful chronicler of a period through which he has lived.

Under these circumstances his Memoir forms a work of simple good faith and intense interest. It is, in fact, a work pre-eminently characterized by its scrupulous love of truth. Of a style plain and devoid of artifice, yet always vivacious, it captivates and carries us along. The author agreeably intersperses his "things seen" with anecdotes, conversations, and reflections, the variety of which cannot fail to please the reader. The Baron knew well, and often intimately, most of the remarkable figures of the whole period in politics, letters, art,



science, and the stage; he puts together a gallery of them which is singularly instructive and which is not to be found anywhere else.

It is seventy-eight years since the death of the Duke of Reichstadt in 1832 made the son of King Louis of Holland and Queen Hortense the representative of the Napoleonic dynasty and laid upon him in the eyes of his party what he himself regarded as a mission, the inheritance and obligation of which he accepted as he understood them. He devoted himself wholly to the fulfilment of this task, never shrinking from any means of realizing that aim which he finally accomplished. D'Ambès follows him in the evolution of his career, recalling now concisely, now at circumstantial length, everything in any way connected with this period. Thus he enables us to record a sentence based on full and adequate information on the man himself and his work. This sentence, which it now rests with posterity to pronounce, is much disputed. Several different verdicts have been entered. Some, obstinately implacable, can forgive neither the *Coup d'État* nor Sedan. Others incline to amnesty and regret. To the Marquis de Massa, for instance, the Emperor is a gentle dreamer with but one thought—the amelioration of the workman's lot and the private soldier's, “a truly benevolent Head of the State in whose bosom beats a heart all French, a profoundly feeling and nobly generous soul.” To Paul and Victor Margueritte this dreamer, “good-natured even to weakness,” was the worst of visionaries and a ready-made dupe for every charlatan to practise on, a man who trusted blindly to his star till it led him to destruction, one we must pronounce “a drifting soul to which another soul, the Empress, gave the governing impulse.”

To read these Memoirs of the Baron d'Ambès will serve as guide to such as are unwilling to commit themselves to a definite and final judgment without first having all the evidence in the case before their eyes.

CH. SIMOND.

M. C. POINSOT.



## INTRODUCTION

BY THE BARON D'AMBÈS

*July 1st, 1893.*—A bouquet, laid on my table by a loving hand, reminds me that I am eighty to-day.

It is high time to think about making my second will. The first, which sets my worldly affairs in order, was executed long ago. By my *second*, I mean this huge heap of loose papers that I have had put down there in front of me . . . all my life . . . all my memories . . . my reflections, my dreams, my indiscretions, my furtive peeps at men and things . . . private and personal documents . . . notes of what I have read, accounts of what I have seen—sometimes what I have seen and said nothing about! . . . records of what I have thought and what I have wished. A man of business, a statesman, a scholar (though I have rather shunned literature to seem more *serious*), I have put it all down here, in these scribbled sheets, often undated, and in a terrible state of confusion!

Friends have assured me this voluminous budget was of value because it embraced three quarters of a century . . . that it should be sorted and set in order . . . and published.

Published? Others must do that if they deem it any use. Not I! . . . I, an author? I laugh at the notion in my white beard!

But I am very willing to classify the things. It will

be an opportunity to re-read my hieroglyphics—these letters, these impressions, these memorials of my folly and my wisdom. . . . It is a bit of history after all! and may prove useful to the next generation.

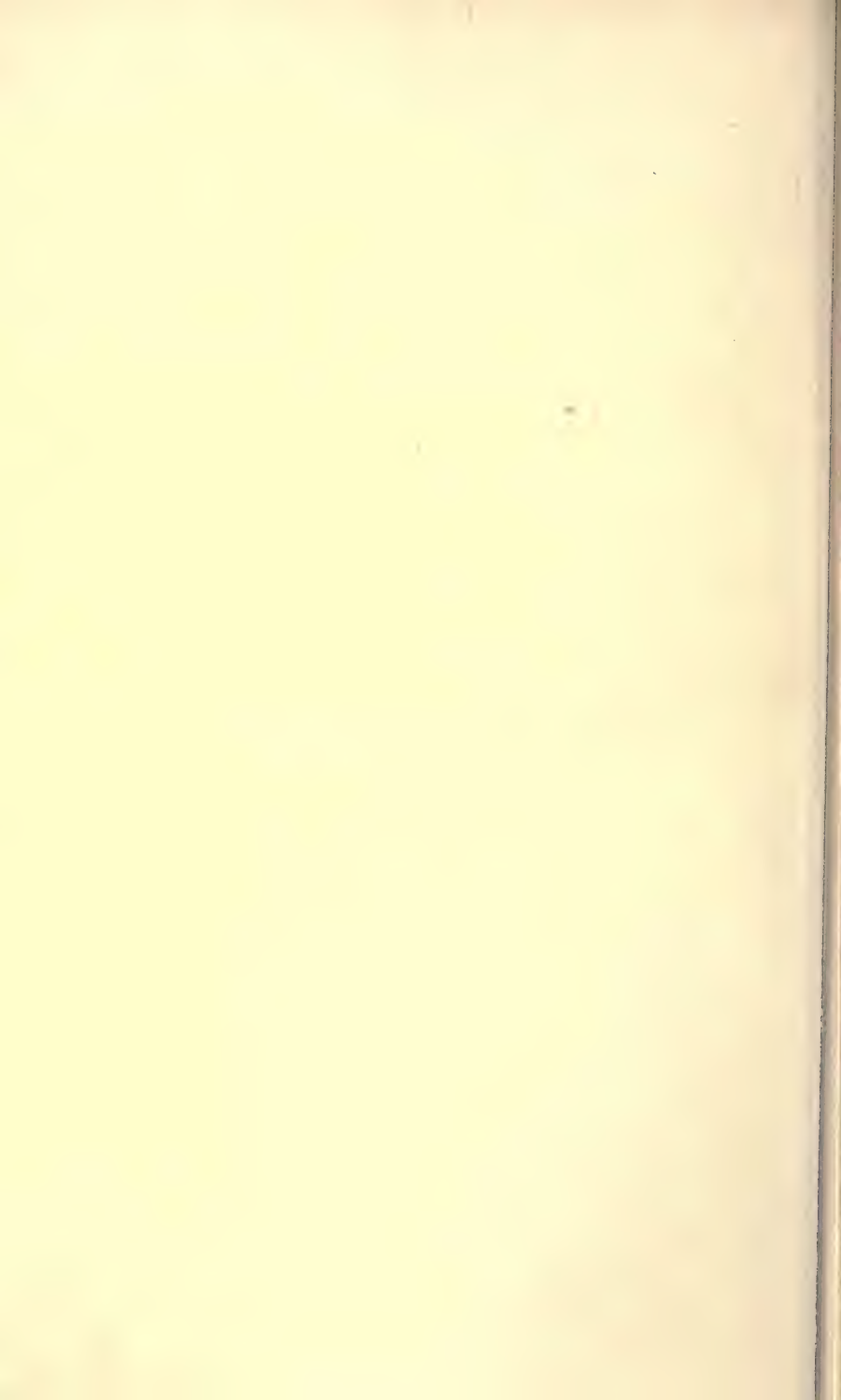
But death, is not *Death*, the traitor, at hand to put a sudden stop to my fine project?

Well, what must be, must be. . . . Louis<sup>1</sup> will unravel the rest—if he can. . . .

<sup>1</sup> Christian name of the friend to whom we owe the communication of the Baron d'Ambès' manuscript. He it was, in fact, who was destined to complete the classification begun by the Baron by grouping in chapters the Memoirs of which we have undertaken the publication, while limiting ourselves to the task of reproducing them with the utmost fidelity to the text, merely retouching this a little in places, and adding a few explanatory notes.

**PART I**

**YOUTH AND EARLY MANHOOD;  
EXILE AND CONSPIRATOR**





## CHAPTER I

### WAS LOUIS NAPOLÉON THE SON OF HIS FATHER ?

The Baron d'Ambès has serious doubts—Cardinal Fesch and Corvisart—Character of Louis Bonaparte—Hortense and Louis unhappily mated—Anecdote—Why the \*Empress favoured the marriage—Hortense Beauharnais: a passionate temperament, a bad bringing-up, unfortunate surroundings—Mme Campan's school at Saint-Germain—Life in the Rue de la Victoire—Joséphine's bad example; like mother, like daughter—Napoleon returns from Italy: a terrible scene—The Baron Thiébault—A hurried wedding: *the case was urgent*—Hortense Queen of Holland—The Emperor and the little Napoléon Charles—Death of the latter—Napoleon at Saint-Cloud after the Peace of Tilsit—Temperament and opportunity—The Queen at Cauterets; comparison of dates—Two important letters.

May 6th, 1838.—*À propos* of an announcement in the *Siècle* of the Comte de Saint-Leu, otherwise Louis Bonaparte's, second marriage in April of that year with the Marchesa Strozzi at Florence, the bridegroom being then sixty and half-paralysed, the bride a beautiful girl of seventeen.

Poor Louis Bonaparte ! . . . I say *poor* Louis Bonaparte when I think of his life with Hortense—one living martyrdom—and of his bodily infirmities.

My own impression is that the King of Holland never had any children—in defiance of history which gives him three, and gossip which adds a bastard to the list.

Of the three sons officially attributed to him, the eldest, Napoléon Charles, strikes me as in all probability the offspring of his brother, Napoleon the Great. The second . . . we cannot say. The third . . . we are in two minds. And this recalls an amusing speech of Cardinal Fesch's .

"When it comes to fixing the fathers of her children, Hortense is always confused about her dates."

As for the bastard mentioned, this must be the François Louis de Castel Vecchio who was born at Rome in 1826—but not by the Ex-King of Holland, so much is certain!

Louis Bonaparte I believe to have been incapable of begetting children.

On this point I note a curious conversation between the famous physician, Corvisart des Marets, and a colleague.

Personally I never knew Corvisart, who died in 1821, when I was barely eight years old. But I am assured by the son of one of his colleagues at the École de Médecine that these remarks passed between his father and the great man.

It was shortly after the birth of Louis Napoléon—in 1808 therefore. The professor in question would appear to have asked the author of the *Essai sur les maladies du cœur*:

"Come, frankly now, what do *you* think of the rumours current about Louis Napoléon as a father?"

"Public opinion," replied the Baron, "bases its suspicions on Queen Hortense's ill-balanced character; I base mine on the King's state of health. He is an invalid, a scrofulous subject, *impotent*. . . . I would swear to it, if one could ever swear to matters so private and delicate as this. . . . But I have attended him too often to entertain any doubt as to his incapacity to beget offspring!"

This was what the Emperor's chief physician thought of the matter, the man who attended medically almost all the members of the Imperial family.

\* \* \*

*Date illegible.*—I spoke just now of the married life of Louis Bonaparte as a martyrdom, and I repeat this phrase deliberately when I think of the two, husband and wife. Louis Bonaparte is fearfully jealous of his wife—a perfect Bluebeard, it would seem. He never

leaves her alone, sets spies on her, questions her in such a suspicious, even insulting way that poor Hortense cries with shame and indignation. He forbids her spending a single night at Saint-Cloud. . . . This is perhaps the very best way to make her deceive him, which—so says scandal—she certainly does not fail to do.

Touching his character, so ill-adapted for married life, we must yet note some good points. He is a man of tender feeling—outside his own household,—simple-souled and peace-loving, a man of reading, rather in the romantic line, a mind highly trained in philosophy, of simple, country tastes, a scholar whom only the chances of life turned into a soldier and set upon a throne.

He is not lacking in courage. At sixteen he served as aide-de-camp to his brother with the Army of Italy. At the passage of the Po he was to be seen at the head of the attacking column. He was first in the breach at Pizzighettone. He joined the grenadiers and sappers who were beating in the gates of Pavia with axes and hatchets. A gallant soldier ; but what a poor sort of husband ! What an unsatisfactory lover ! He does not like women, and says of them :

“ They overvalue whatever is bright and brilliant, they are over-fond of display ; there is no real happiness to be had with them.”

In a word, he prefers retirement, study, a quiet life, books to read. An exchange of letters with Bernardin de Saint-Pierre, a talk shared in by the savants of the Malmaison coterie, are more to his taste than a conversation with his companions in arms of which glory, doughty deeds and death on the battle-field are the subjects.

\* \* \*

*A further entry.*—It is absolutely certain Louis Bonaparte disliked his wife. In 1820 he admits as much ten times over in his *Documents historiques*. From 1802 to 1807, he vouches for the fact himself, *they only lived together four months, at three several periods separated by long intervals.*

Why does Louis say this ? To make the world



believe, in spite of everything, that his three sons are his. For my part, I don't believe a word of it. Of the three, one at least, and perhaps two, are the offspring of Napoleon I.

As for Louis Bonaparte, my conviction is he detested Hortense *even before his marriage*. The *Mémoires sur la Cour de Louis Napoléon et sur la Hollande*, published in 1828, show this plainly and confirm my own view. And my view, to speak the unvarnished truth, is this : Hortense and Louis never actually cohabited together. They were mutually repugnant.

I have heard my adopted father, Dutch Ambassador at the Russian Court, tell an anecdote bearing on this :

In 1810 the Queen of Holland came from Utrecht to Amsterdam to take possession of her apartments in the Palace. Now, what did the King do the two or three days preceding her arrival ? He built up all communications between the two suites of rooms, so as to be quite sure neither should trespass on the other's domain.

"Is not your Majesty afraid," my father ventured to observe, "this separation, so open and obvious, may trouble and disconcert the nation, which must soon hear of it through the numerous persons who frequent the Palace and from the workmen employed to block up the doors ?"

"That is a matter of indifference to me," the King replied to my father's remonstrance. "Or rather, I prefer that the world should clearly know that I have no sympathy whatsoever with the Queen's feelings."

And, to mark his purpose yet more strongly, he had the embrasures of the doors walled up too !

From the nuptial benediction to the final and definitive separation, it was always the same. Hortense cordially reciprocated her husband's hatred, and encouraged Royal favourites.

Under such circumstances, need we wonder if Hortense's children could claim parentage from anybody rather than Louis Bonaparte ?



Under what circumstances had this ill-assorted union been brought about ? It was Joséphine who particularly favoured the marriage. She was much attached to Louis. He alone among Napoleon's brothers treated her with kindness and loyalty at a time when the others were urging the master to divorce her and doing her every disservice they could. In her letters to her daughter she had always a good word to say of him.

Napoleon had other reasons for desiring the same end. Fouché declares roundly that he also wished the marriage of Louis and Hortense to serve as a screen for his own intrigue with his daughter-in-law. If this intrigue is authentic, it may be so. But another motive was predominant—to have an heir-male in his family to bequeath the crown to. Joséphine, so long tortured by this dread of divorce, likewise hoped that her husband would abandon the accursed project in view of the birth of an heir, even a collateral one.

\* \* \*

*November 1880.*—It must not be supposed I entertain any antipathy for Louis Bonaparte, in spite of anything I may have said about him in these notes. He was a hard worker, a good and honourable man, a trifle eccentric, a trifle narrow, very suspicious, a busybody, but deeply imbued with a sense of duty. His wife's children being his in the world's eyes, he played a careful father's part towards them, solicitous for their education and happiness.

He was the exact opposite of Queen Hortense—capricious, fanciful, yet always fascinating, and a kind mother too. Physically, morally, they were discordant, and both were unhappy in consequence. They are to be pitied.

Especially pitiable the lot of Louis Bonaparte, a husband in spite of himself, a soldier by force of circumstances, a King against his will ! His wife did not love him, and he could not divorce her. Raised by his brother to the highest honours—General, Councillor of State, Prince, Constable of France—he begs and prays the Emperor to let him live in peace. The Emperor smiles,

rallies him, and makes him a king, under very arduous circumstances, in which he only manages to displease everybody, his brother included.

After that, exile, paralysis. . . . Enough, and more than enough, to induce us to be very indulgent to his faults.

Only once have I had an opportunity of seeing him. This was at Florence, and on that occasion I heard him utter a speech deeply tinged with a certain philosophic melancholy : " There are two categories of unhappy persons—those who spend their life in striving to satisfy their ambitions without ever succeeding, and those who spend it in submitting to honours they never strive to win. The bitterness of either lot is the same. For myself, who have known so much of the second, two things have yet always consoled me—a quiet conscience and the friendly companionship of my books."

\* \* \*

*Hortense Beauharnais*.—I do not believe Napoleon III. is the son of Louis Bonaparte, that crabbed, jealous husband, a chronic invalid and beyond a doubt impotent.

This amounts to saying that Hortense had a lover or lovers. This is serious ! Alas ! there is no secret about the matter. The fact is notorious that Hortense distributed her affections somewhat widely, despite the tyrannical surveillance of her lawful master. But then, she surely had good excuse !

Let us recall her girlhood and the examples she had about her.

Every one has heard of her mother's numberless intrigues. I am not here writing official history, any more than I am cultivating scandal. A manual for schoolboys is one thing, or a formal memoir for ladies of society ; a private and confidential diary is something altogether different.

Joséphine was Tallien's mistress—indeed, he had saved her life in 1794, when she lay in prison and narrowly escaped mounting the scaffold like her husband, the Vicomte de Beauharnais—one of those services a woman



can hardly over-repay. Barras loved her, and Lieutenant Charles—and how many more? I was going to forget General Bonaparte, who set an Empress's diadem on her brow! I am convinced she really loved him, apart from all selfish calculations. But it is only too plain she was repeatedly unfaithful.

Well, like mother, like daughter; each had the same passionate temperament.

Then at Mme Campan's school at Saint-Germain, to which Hortense was sent along with her niece Émilie (the only woman, it would seem, who really loved and was loved by Louis Bonaparte), discipline was none of the strictest. This is shown by the fact that most of Hortense's schoolfellows turned out women of accommodating, very accommodating, virtue: such as the well-known Zoé Tallon, who, under the name of Mme de Cayla, was the chosen mistress of the fleshy Louis XVIII. Mme Campan, with a keen eye for the future, showed herself full of indulgence for Joséphine's daughter and troubled her very little with sermons on morality, as little as she did her other young charges—Aimée Leclerc, who married Davoust; Mlle de Syré, who became Mme de Nicolai; Mlle Hulot, afterwards General Moreau's bride; the future Duchesse de Tarente, the future Duchesse de Rovigo, the future Duchesse de Plaisance, and Caroline, Napoleon's sister, presently to be Queen of Naples . . . a bevy of young beauties darting dangerous glances, pouting red lips all ready to be kissed!

At the end of the year, it was Mme Campan's custom to give a brilliant entertainment, at which her pupils would play some well-known piece, like the young ladies of Saint-Cyr.

When Bonaparte returned from Italy this tactful schoolmistress invited him to come and inspect her establishment, and it was there that the General, already famous and victorious, saw Hortense in the part of Esther.

There and then, perhaps, the spark was kindled in the hero's bosom at sight of the entrancing grace of his wife's daughter.

In Paris, again, it is notorious that Joséphine consoled herself so well for her husband's absence abroad that, as the Duchesse d'Abrantès used to tell me, her reputation was so flawed that she and her daughter were shunned by self-respecting people. In confirmation of this, I know for a fact that the family of the Gohiers rejected the advances made by Madame la Générale Bonaparte with a view to marry Hortense to their son. This project foiled, Joséphine sounded Rewbell, whose son was to her liking; but the young man was antipathetic to Hortense, who flatly refused.

Every one has read of the terrible domestic scene that marked Bonaparte's return and the revelations of his wife's behaviour. Eventually he forgave her, but only because the arch-deceiver was adroit enough to appeal to his commiseration through the prayers of Hortense and Hortense's brother, Eugène Beauharnais.

Again, at Malmaison, a little later, what opportunities Hortense enjoyed of essaying the effect of her young charms! When, after quitting the Rue de la Victoire for the Petit-Luxembourg, and the Petit-Luxembourg for the Tuileries, Bonaparte definitely took up his abode in that Palace, he surrendered the mezzanine floor to his wife and daughter-in-law, and directed them to organize fêtes, receptions, and balls both in Paris and at Malmaison. On Wednesdays there was a state banquet. Plays were frequently staged. I can still hear Junot's wife (the Duchesse d'Abrantès) telling me of all the fascinations, the charm and elegance of the Consular Court; of gowns of white flowered crêpe, of flower-wreathed coiffures, of festive halls crowded with young and smiling faces; and, moving about amid all this splendour, the First Consul, who even now felt he must be Emperor soon, but was waiting his hour to place on his head the heavy crown of sovereignty.

How fascinating a figure, Hortense in those days!—exquisitely fair, with amethyst eyes, a willowy shape, grace in every movement, every gesture! Her feet were a trifle too small and her teeth a little too long, but what perfect hands and pearly nails, almond-shaped and care-



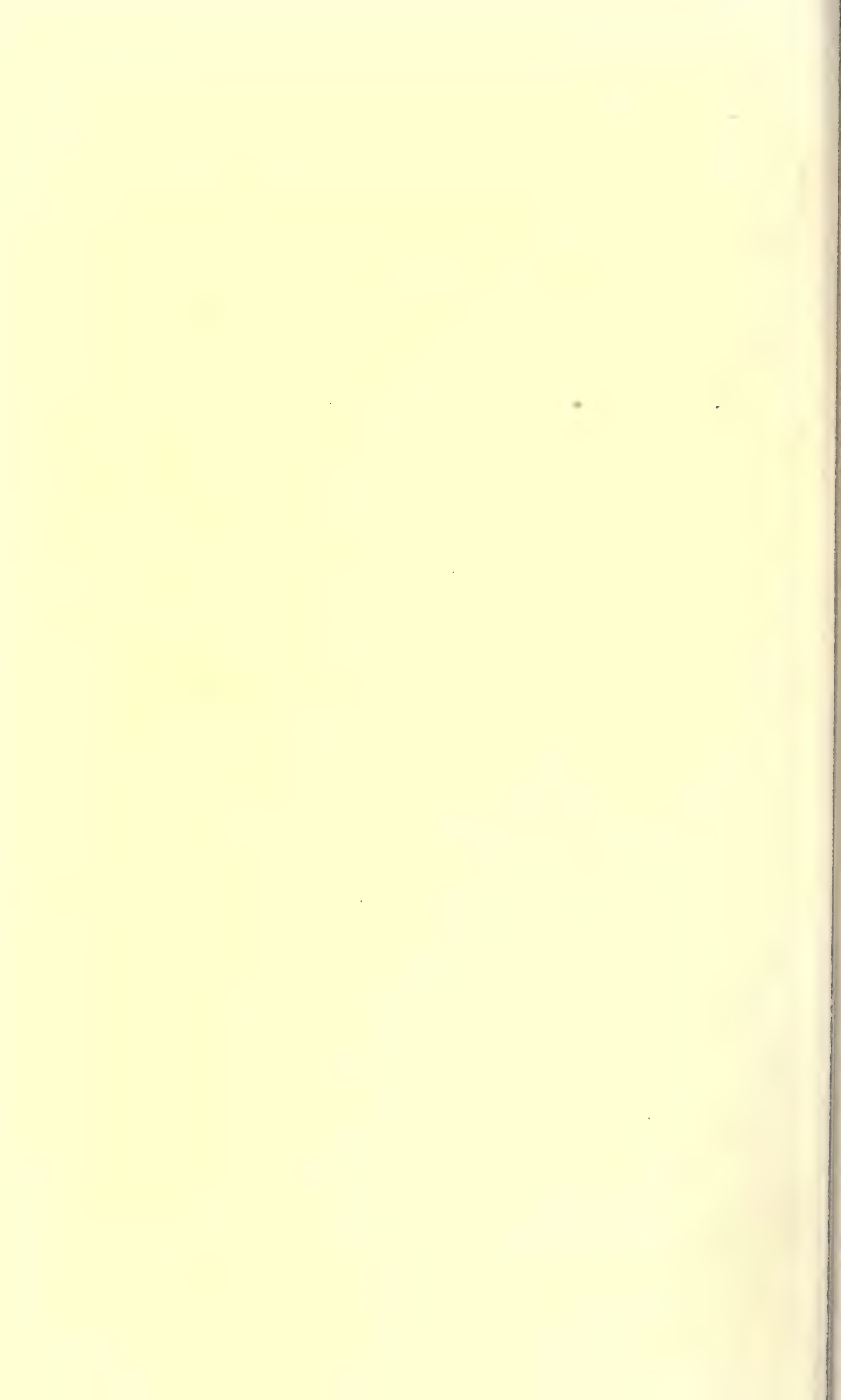


LOUIS BONAPARTE, KING OF HOLLAND.



BÉRANGER.





fully tended ! Her whole person was a gracious appeal, an adorable free-will offering, to whosoever would bestow his love on her—and, to satisfy this ardent loveliness, they could find nothing better than to throw in her arms a weakling invalid, a grumbling valetudinarian ! It was to invite disaster !

Hortense was gay, witty, artistic, agreeable. She had studied painting with Isabey and could play the piano—play it very well, even such difficult pieces as the *Barber of Seville*. She was a good hostess, a good talker, and rarely spoke ill of others. Naturally she was courted by many. Whom did she love ?

Duroc, to begin with. Duroc was a handsome young officer of thirty. Bourrienne (Napoleon's secretary) was on the look out for a suitable match. At one time he had thought of Jérôme Bonaparte, at another of Lucien, or at any rate approved Joséphine's views as to the latter, for Hortense's mother was set on having—and her persistence was rewarded—a Bonaparte for a son-in-law. Duroc seemed in no hurry to fall into Hortense's arms, any more than Gohier and Rewbell had previously shown themselves.

\* \* \*

It is about this time that we must look for the beginning of a liaison between Napoleon Bonaparte and his youthful protégée.

Napoleon had set out for Italy two days after his own marriage ; so that it is only on his return, in January 1798, after the Congress of Rastadt, that he came into relation with Hortense. It was no doubt on his visits to see her at Saint-Germain that he was stirred by the child's grace and girlish charms. It would seem he hesitated for several years—a rather long time for the slow ripening in his heart of a passion he knew to be highly compromising, but which nevertheless mastered him in all likelihood about 1801.

It should be added that Hortense, far from falling instantly in love with her mother's husband, began by detesting him. From the first she had shown herself

grieved and deeply vexed at Joséphine's second marriage. Then subsequently, when they lived habitually together, the Consul's flatteries and cajolements, and, above all, that magnetism few women can resist, the powerful attraction of a military repute for ever rising to higher and higher planes of glory, could not but tame her spirit, smooth away her reluctance and overcome her scruples little by little.

Each, then, was drawn to the other by a mutual impulse that grew stronger month by month, or rather every time the world-famous warrior and the fair-haired maiden (there were but fourteen years between them, after all) found themselves together.

The existence of any such liaison has been vehemently denied—by the Duchesse d'Abrantès, by Madame Durand, and other intimates of the Consular and Imperial Court, who saw in such reports only "royalist calumnies," expressly in the *Mémorial de Sainte-Hélène*, and, naturally enough, by the persons chiefly concerned, Hortense and Napoleon.

For my own part, what more can I do than repeat what I have heard from Baron Thiébault?—

"Napoleon cast his eyes on Hortense from the first day she was marriageable. He remarked her when she was still a pupil at Mme Campan's. The latter, a very clever woman and not too scrupulous, in the sense that she would stick at nothing to win over a protector likely to prove useful to herself, was quick to divine the influence General Bonaparte was soon to wield, and strained every nerve to please him. She noticed the growing liking of the General for her young and fascinating pupil, and made up her mind to foster it, while at the same time Joséphine, ever haunted by the nightmare dread of divorce, saw in the intrigue something that might perhaps divert her husband's thoughts from the idea. Thus both were at one in facilitating Napoleon's meetings with Hortense.

Was Hortense already *enceinte* when she married Louis—which would account for the way the wedding was hurried on,—or did Napoleon give her a child



directly after she was a bride? I do not know. In any case, this much is certain, that some one did so at the date when she was united against her will to Louis Bonaparte, and this *some one* can be no other but Napoleon. . . .

There is no escaping the fact that the marriage in question was forced on with headlong precipitancy.

Hortense did not care for Louis—how could she? So much the worse for her. This time, cost what it might, Joséphine was determined to succeed. Napoleon, too, insisted on the marriage, and so peremptorily he must have had a pressing motive. We can guess what it was! . . . *The case was urgent*—these four words sufficiently reveal the predicament.

\* \* \*

Louis Bonaparte, declared Mme de Rémusat to an individual who repeated her words to me, “in an unfortunate fit of outspokenness, informed his wife of her mother’s failings, at the same time upbraiding her for her relations with Napoleon, adding a thousand other outrageous remarks in a scene in which he proceeded to positive insult and which redoubled the detestation in which Hortense held him.”

Bonaparte was childless, and the question of the succession was already weighing on his mind, Lucien possessing only a daughter. Accordingly, the heir presumptive of a crown which the First Consul was even now dreaming of as resting on his head was to be the son of Louis, the brother whom of all the family he was most attached to—or, at any rate, the son of that brother’s wife, whether he was the father or no—a matter that was of small concern to the public and in the eye of Europe.

It is certain that the unfortunate husband was aware, through the Murats or other informants, of the odious report that was current. Better than any one he must have known what to think. In any case, after the scene I have just mentioned, he kept a watch over his wife with a tyrannical harshness that was beyond bearing, even setting lackeys to spy on her actions. Hortense



saw it all, and said nothing ; but what a passion of resentment, stronger and more deep-seated every day, must she have been accumulating against her husband !

In June 1806 Hortense Bonaparte became Queen of Holland. She would have preferred to be Queen of Naples, and swore her kingdom should not often enjoy her presence. She looked upon her aggrandizement—the Chancellor Pasquier admitted as much to me—rather as affording her new satisfactions to enjoy than as involving fresh duties to be fulfilled ; whereas Louis, on the other hand, thought more of its responsibilities than its pleasures. Nothing was changed in the domestic estrangement of this ill-assorted couple.

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*Napoléon Charles.*—Napoleon I. always treated Hortense's first-born as his own son. It is beyond a doubt that he adored this little Napoléon Charles. He left entirely uncontradicted the rumour that he was the father—a rumour that, as we have seen, was not unsupported by facts. He looked upon the child as his heir.

So he lavished on him every care and indulgence of a father, and delighted in joining in his childish romps. He had him brought in to meals and sat him on the table, letting the young scamp chatter his fill and even break the glasses. He would play with him, too, and promenade about, *à la Henri IV.*, on hands and knees, to hear the lad laugh. The little one called him "Oncle Bibiche," because he often took him into the garden to see the gazelles, offer them snuff, and sit him to ride "straddle legs" on their backs. One day baby pinched his "Nuncle" so hard he gave him quite a bruise, to the great delight of the "Master of the Hour."

Napoléon Charles, pending the arrival of the King of Rome, could take any liberty. His death, in 1807, wounded the Emperor cruelly. Many partisans, particularly in 1832, after the death of the Duc de Reichstadt, and after that of Hortense's second son, wished from the bottom of their hearts that the loves of the Queen of

Holland and her father-in-law had had some better basis than legend; for State morality is not the same as private, and in this way Napoleon III. would be really the son of Napoleon I.; illegitimate—what matter for that?—but true son of his genius and his aspirations.

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*Was Napoleon I. the father of Napoleon III.?*

Yes, Napoleon loved Hortense—that is beyond a doubt. He loved her even before her marriage, and most likely it was to hide this intrigue that he married her so ill and so hurriedly. He loved her subsequently also, intermittently, during the years of his prime—years which, in the Great Emperor's case, were characterized by an insatiable amorousness. In 1802 Hortense was nineteen; in 1807 she was only twenty-four. On bad terms with her husband, but flattered and cajoled by the Emperor, how easy must she have found the *faux-pas* which brought her to the arms of the most puissant monarch and most ardent lover of his time!

But to come to facts.

Louis Napoléon was born towards the end of April, 1808. Nine months' pregnancy carry us back to the end of July 1807—in round numbers. On July 7th of that year Napoleon I. had signed the famous Treaty of Tilsit. After paying a visit to the Tsar Alexander and a short stay at Königsberg, he was back at Saint-Cloud *before the end of the month*, and the cannon of the Invalides had announced his return, “thundering forth a signal,” to use Thiers's words, “that found an echo in every heart, of the triumphant accomplishment of his designs.”

Here is something, then, to go upon. Napoleon was in France at the end of July. No doubt he had much to do. On the morrow of his return he called together the great dignitaries of State, the Ministers, and leading members of the Corps de l'État. On the days immediately following he issued orders “which embraced all Europe from Corfu to Königsberg,” and which secured, there and then, all the advantages accruing from the settlement of Tilsit; he despatched Savary to Strassburg,



rearranged the distribution of his troops in Prussia and Poland, sent a warning to King Louis threatening to block the harbours of Holland with his troops and customs officers if he persisted in interfering with his plans, informed the Cabinet of Madrid of his wishes, the Portuguese Government of his demands, forced Italy to agree to his anti-English policy, gave endless and detailed instructions to King Joseph, to Prince Eugène, to General Marmont ; at the same time he was actively reorganizing his fleets, and, in one word, contriving all possible means of terrifying England. A busy time, certainly ! But we know how all this amazing activity, though emanating solely from Saint-Cloud, was no bar either to the famous *nights of Saint-Cloud* or to the satisfaction of his ardent passion for the sex. Bloodshed, death, love have strange and terrible mutual interactions, as all physiologists are aware. Moreover, Napoleon's fierce caprices and savage peremptoriness in such circumstances are notorious. What more likely than that, on his return from Tilsit in 1807, excited with battle and stimulated by victory, he satisfied one of these formidable accesses of desire in the arms of Hortense ?

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Madame Bonaparte was brought to bed in April 1808, in Paris. A strange circumstance : *her husband was not by her side !* This does not, of course, positively imply a repudiation of fatherhood, but it gave free course to scandalous comments.

But at the critical date (July 1807) Queen Hortense was at the baths of Cauterets, and there is nothing to justify the suspicions directed against her, so her defenders maintain.

True, the Queen *was* at Cauterets, having gone there in June, as is proved by a letter of Napoleon's dated the 16th, in answer to one from the Queen of Holland, written from Orleans, *en route* for the Pyrenees. Louis soon afterwards arrived to join his wife in the south. A letter of Joséphine announced, on June 4th, the King's arrival at Saint-Leu, his intended visit on the morrow and

departure to meet his wife, ending with the expression of a hope that the meeting might lead to a reconciliation between the pair so bitterly envenomed one against the other.

Louis travelled south, I admit, to rejoin his wife, who had preceded him. But did he go as far as Cauterets? It is very difficult to clear up this point. I have consulted a number of persons on the subject.

Some of them told me: Undoubtedly the King of Holland stayed with his wife at Cauterets. They were seen together. There is even a farm-house in the neighbourhood<sup>1</sup> where we are informed they met, and patched up a reconciliation of which Napoleon III.'s birth was the result. But I find it hard to regard this as anything better than a local legend.

Others declared: No, Louis Bonaparte was only at Barèges, and from there he went to Toulouse, where Hortense joined him in the middle of August. Which are we to believe? But, after all, what does it matter? Whether husband and wife met at Cauterets or at Toulouse, if they were still as hostilely disposed as ever, if Louis Bonaparte would have nothing to do with his wife, or if he was incapable of begetting a child, is not the final result the same?

Then who *was* the father of the child born the following spring?

They say Hortense did not know herself. Nonsense! Only some things are buried deep in the depths of a woman's heart.

A part of the Court had accompanied the Queen to Cauterets. Among these were Admiral Verhuell and the Duc Decazes, who, if we are to believe Caroline Bonaparte, were both of them Hortense's lovers. Both enjoyed long hours of privacy with the Queen, who occupied a small house in the Place Saint-Martin, at Cauterets.

\* \* \*

Is it an impossible conjecture that Napoleon may

<sup>1</sup> This farm-house is still standing. It is at the top of a mountain height constantly visited by tourists—not by the Baron d'Ambès.



have gone to join her at this date? My father has spoken to me of an absence the Emperor would seem to have made during the first fortnight of August. Could he have visited Cauterets? And could he have been long enough away to allow for the journey there and back?

Others, however, deny that Napoleon, fully occupied with the arrangements consequent upon the Treaty of Tilsit, ever left Saint-Cloud at all at this time. All is darkness and mystery. Others, again, maintain that the Great Captain had based many high hopes on little Napoléon Charles, who had expired three months before this date, and that it is highly probable the victor of Friedland, intoxicated with his triumph yet furious with Fate which denied him legitimate offspring, dared a wild, desperate effort to replace the dead child.

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*Under a later date.*—I append to all that I have said above the copy of a portion of a very significant letter which has just been brought to light, one the importance of which will be at once recognized. It is dated September 14th, 1816. It is the missive by which the Ex-King of Holland informs his wife of the petition for nullification of their marriage which he had lodged with the Holy Father.

“Madame,—All France is aware that our marriage was contracted against our wishes, for political reasons, as a result of my father’s firm and irresistible resolution and the slender hope your mother entertained of having children.

“Signature of the contract, civil marriage, religious marriage succeeded immediately one after the other on the same evening. I remember how, during the benediction, I gave you the wedding-ring and you received it reluctantly, with an effort and our hands trembling.

“We were conducted to the bridal chamber by your mother and my brother; the marriage was consummated during the month we then passed together. But what

tears and recriminations and scenes of wretchedness marked that period!

“Since then, more than fourteen years have elapsed and *we have never once been in agreement!*

“Throughout this very considerable length of time, *we have lived barely three months and a half as husband and wife, and always with unmistakable tokens of aversion, or at any rate lack of sympathy!* These three months were divided into three periods, not only very brief in themselves, but likewise separated by several whole years in between. The first lasted about a month, that is till you had developed marks of pregnancy. I left you to go to my little estate of Baillon, near Chantilly, and afterward to Barèges. I was summoned back several months afterwards at the date of our first child’s birth. We lived the whole winter under the same roof, but on different floors, and all the time having no corporeal relations.

“The second time when we lived conjugally was, two years after, at Compiègne, where we remained about two months, and lastly at Toulouse in 1807, from the 12th of the month of August when you came from Cauterets to join me until our arrival at Saint-Cloud towards the end of the month.

“During these three periods, etc. . . .”

This is very plain speaking. Note, in the first place, that the letter contains allusions to the Queen’s light behaviour. Further, the dates should be observed. The normal duration of pregnancy is two hundred and seventy days. Louis Napoléon was born on April 20th, 1808, so conception would date back to July 24th of the year before. Now the Queen only rejoined her husband on August 12th; it follows that she was *enceinte* at that date. There is no doubt, therefore, that the Queen’s third pregnancy was extra-marital.

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*Further note.*—Louis Bonaparte never, as an actual

fact, recognized his son Louis Napoléon. When he petitioned for a legal separation against his wife, he demanded, claimed custody of only one child, the eldest. In his apartments he preserved all the portraits of his relatives and children, save and except that of the future Napoleon III., and they say he boasted of the exception. He was not present on the occasion of the child's birth, nor yet at its baptism. Naturally kind-hearted, he did not take an aversion to the boy, and gave him advice and admonition as a father; but these were merely marks of interest to satisfy the world, the same as his will, in which, if he had omitted to include Louis Napoléon's name, he would have been blackening at once his wife's reputation and besmirching the family name.

In conclusion, I have read in the pages of *La France Impériale* in 1873 or 1874 the following letter which M. Sorlin stated he had copied from the Vatican archives. It belongs to the epoch of the Italian insurrection, in which Hortense's two sons took part and in which the elder met with his death :

"Holy Father,—My soul is overborne with grief, and I burned with indignation when I heard of the criminal attempt made by my son against your Holiness's authority. . . . The unhappy boy is dead; God have pity on him! . . . *As for the other, who usurps my name, you are aware, Holy Father, that he, God be thanked, is nothing to me.* I have the misfortune to have as wife a Messalina who, etc. . . ."

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1875.—Rocquain has just published the correspondence of Napoleon I. and Louis Bonaparte.

I note this passage in a letter from the Emperor dated December 16th, 1807: ". . . I think it is not advisable to send Marshal Verhuell to St. Petersburg. . . . I need not go into the reasons which induce you to get rid of your Minister of Marine. . . But if you are set on removing Verhuell to a distance, I prefer you should send him as Ambassador to Paris." In reply to which, on the 26th of the same month, Louis wrote :



"Immediately on the receipt of your Majesty's letter, I accredited Marshal Verhuell my Ambassador at your Majesty's Court. It is true, Sire, I have had special reasons to make a change in the functions wherewith I entrust M. Verhuell . . . He is a man of honour and good officer, but no administrator and very extravagant in his expenditure. *There is even a matter of domestic behaviour which has compelled me. . . .*"

Did Louis Bonaparte suspect Verhuell ? It has been insinuated that Louis Napoléon did not show the characteristic type of the Bonapartes, but seemed rather of Dutch stock.

I do not say the Admiral was not one of the Queen's "admirers." But I am no believer in the transmission of unmistakable hereditary peculiarities. Be this as it may, Napoleon III. is certainly, above all morally, of the race of the Great Corsican whose life-work he has striven to continue both in his acts and in his aspirations.



## CHAPTER II

### BIRTH AND CHILDHOOD

1807—1815

Pregnancy of Queen Hortense—Birth of Napoleon III.—Abdication of King Louis Bonaparte—Delicate health of the little Louis Napoléon—Early years—A sensitive child—1813—The star of Napoleon on the wane—1814—A page of recollections from the Emperor's own hand—The invasion—Hortense a heroine—Midnight wanderings—Brought to bay—Fall of the Empire; Treaty of Fontainebleau—Death of Joséphine—Hortense and Louis XVIII.—The Hundred Days—More recollections confided by Napoleon III. to the Baron d'Ambès—At Malmaison—Hortense an exile like the rest—Wanderings and tribulations of a banished Queen—Impressions left on the mind of Napoleon III. by these troublous days.

*Before the birth.*—I am only five years younger than Napoleon III. I have seen, known, questioned many of the persons who witnessed his earlier years and gathered from their lips precious evidence as to that time, so full of interest as affording indications of the Emperor's temperament and the first manifestations of his thought. Moreover, he has himself related his childish impressions, and elsewhere I have transcribed his own accounts.<sup>1</sup>

In September 1807 Louis Bonaparte set off on his return to Holland with unfeigned delight, while the Queen came to Fontainebleau, suffering from the fatigues of pregnancy and embittered by conjugal misunderstandings that seemed endless, yet well pleased to be once more free.

<sup>1</sup> See subsequently. We would remind the reader that—especially in these earlier chapters—we do not so much follow the order of the MS. as left by the Baron d'Ambès as the chronological order, at once more logical and forming in a sense a history of Napoleon III. The whole of this chapter, indeed, is more *history* than *chronicle*; the author has manifestly completed what he knew personally by consulting the authority of books.

Thus the winter wore away and the spring arrived, while day by day the signs of approaching motherhood became more marked in the Princess who was to bear one of my best friends and the most illustrious of them all.

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*The future Emperor's birth.*—On April 20th, a Wednesday, at one o'clock in the morning, at No. 17 of the Rue Lafitte, then Rue Cerutti, in the *hôtel* belonging to the Rothschilds, the same house which subsequently housed the Austrian Consulate, Hortense was eventually delivered of a third boy, whose birth was announced throughout the Empire by salvoes of artillery.

Everybody was delighted, and the Empress Joséphine more than anybody. The birth of Louis Napoléon had perhaps once more laid the spectre which for ever haunted her imagination—divorce.

Alas! the Emperor's resolution had little by little strengthened. On his return from the campaign of Essling and Wagram it was irrevocable.

It was a heavy blow for Hortense, who, it must be allowed, had many strokes of ill-fortune in her life. It was indeed, this divorce of the Imperial pair, the beginning of a period of veritable torment which lasted seven years, till the final fall of the Empire.

From the very first this act, which degraded an Empress to the level of the common herd, reflected its shame on her daughter and robbed her of all hope of seeing her sons one day mount a throne. Yet, worse still, the Emperor, divorced himself, flatly refused to consent to the divorce of Hortense and Louis, or even to authorize a formal separation.

Then, at the fêtes in celebration of Napoleon's second marriage, what humiliation to bear the train of the new Empress, in conjunction with the Queens of Spain and of Westphalia and the Princesses Élisabeth and Pauline!

Then, as a last blow, fresh vexations and difficulties to harass her between herself and the King, between the latter and the Emperor. A trivial quarrel and exchange

of blows between lackeys, to which the French Ambassador at the Hague attached an exaggerated importance, occasioned a harsh letter from Napoleon to Louis, who lost all patience and, on July 1st, abdicated at Haarlem in favour of his eldest son. For Hortense, as for her mother, here was a sad fall from how great a height of glory!

This much is certain; it was not solely and simply the tyranny of the Emperor that brought about Louis's double resignation—of a throne and of a consort; it was also the oppressive burden of a marriage, the weight of which he was determined to bear no longer.

On July 2nd, 1810, at midnight, Louis crept furtively from his wing of the Palace and set out for Töplitz. He adopted the name of Comte de Saint-Leu, which he kept ever afterwards, refused, in spite of the representations of M. Decazes, who was sent to remonstrate with him, to settle in French territory, and went to Gratz, in Styria, where he remained till 1813.

It was the end of kingship, the end of all possibility of reconciliation with Hortense, the end of married life and home life. . . .

Hortense—another proof, it would seem, of the tenderness Napoleon felt for her—received from the latter, by way of consolation, permission to demand a separation, to keep her two children, and to enjoy a yearly revenue of two millions of francs.

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*Early Years.*—Despite these consolations, Hortense was still full of anxieties regarding her youngest born. "My son was so weakly I thought I should have lost him at birth," she writes in her *Mémoires*. "We had to bathe him in wine and wrap him in cotton-wool to bring him back to life. Mine never gave me a thought. Before my eyes floated sinister ideas suggesting the certainty of death. . . ." The Prince, indeed, was for a long time very delicate, and it was as much for his health as for the sake of quietness that the continual changes of residence were undertaken—to Saint-Leu, to Baden, to Compiègne, to Aix, to Cauterets, to the house of Mal-



maison, to Fontainebleau, when to the anguish of the anxious mother was added the melancholy of the deserted wife, broken-hearted by Joséphine's fall, and presently by the reverses that were little by little undermining Napoleon's fortunes.

Hortense was full of dreams of a Palace which she had asked the Emperor to build her to replace the *hôtel* in the Rue Cerutti. Meantime she busied herself with tracing plans of it on innumerable sheets of paper which the two little lads would pick up from here and there and everywhere with huge glee, crying, "They're mamma's plans !"

So, for those first seven years, from 1808 to 1815, Napoléon Louis and Louis Napoléon were the consolation of the two mothers whose five millions—the five millions granted then between the two to compensate for their fall from greatness—did not always suffice to drown recollection of the past.

The grandmother especially adored Louis, her "Oui-Oui" as she called him, a saying of whose has been told me from the days of his first lessons.

The Abbé Bertrand was explaining a fable in which metamorphosis was spoken of :

"I should like to change myself into a bird, I should," Oui-Oui suddenly observed. "I would fly away when it was lesson-time, and come back when M. Has [who taught him German] arrived."

"That's not very complimentary to me," remarked M. Bernard.

To which Oui-Oui promptly replied :

"Oh ! what I say refers to the lesson, not the teacher !"

Joséphine was in ecstasies at such prodigies of wit. Louis was five years old at the time. Sometimes he would say, when walking in the woods :

"Oh ! how I love Nature !"

Mme Cornu, his foster-sister, from whom I have learnt many of these details, often assured me of Louis's poetical feelings : he would stand entranced before a landscape, a sunset, a flower ; he loved to distraction,

later on, Shakespeare, Schiller, Corneille, and often recited long pieces of verse by heart.

Mme de Girardin also remarks on this trait in her *Lettres parisiennes* :

One day Louis Napoléon confided to her his love of flowers. His governess, Mme Boucheporn, fearing the child might catch cold, used to put warm water in the watering-can.

"Poor flowers !" he added, "so they never enjoyed the coolness of the water. I was only a baby, yet the precaution struck me as ludicrous."

Another friend told me how Hortense, one day, holding her two children on her knee, asked :

"If you possessed nothing at all and you were alone in the world, what would you do, Charles, to get out of the difficulty ?"

"I should turn soldier," answered Charles, who was also called by the pet name Petit Napoléon, "and I should fight so bravely they would make me an officer."

"And you, Louis, what would you do for a livelihood ?"

"I should sell bunches of violets, like the little boy who stands at the gate of the Tuileries and of whom we buy some every day."

Louis was six when the melancholy season of 1813 opened.

That year his mother made several short stays at Saint-Leu, on one occasion receiving the Empress Marie Louise there, and afterwards went to take the waters at Aix in Savoy, leaving her children as usual at Malmaison with their grandmother and under the surveillance of M. de Marmold and the Abbé Bertrand.

On leaving Savoy Hortense took her children, with their governesses and tutors, to a little country house near Dieppe, where she took up her abode till September, the date of her return to Paris.

Napoleon's star was paling. After the terrible campaign of Russia, the allies, to use Blücher's phrase, were beginning to "wear out the Emperor." The campaign of Germany, a magnificent display of stubborn courage,



NAPOLEON ON HORSEBACK IN LONDON.  
From Count d'Orsay's sketch of 1840.



QUEEN HORTENSE.  
From a contemporary print.





was following its course. The French won three victories in one day, *but* they were in retreat. Onwards to the frontier rolled slowly, irresistibly the mighty tide of European hate, bristling with sword and cannon.

In 1814 Louis Bonaparte gave proof of true patriotism. He returned to France when he saw Europe coalescing against her. Hortense could write in her *Mémoires*: "My husband is a man of honour. If our characters failed to sympathize, it was because we both had faults that refused to go together." The admission is sincere and fine. It has been too often alleged, on the other side, that Hortense was Royalist in feeling and anti-Bonapartist. The ardent affection she entertained towards the person of the Emperor had its counterpart in a devoted Imperialism. She felt deeply the ill fortune of the man to whom she owed everything. And when she learned that Marie Louise meant to quit Paris at the most critical moment, she had the courage to go and tell her how little worthy such conduct was of an Empress.

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*A page of reminiscences written by the Emperor himself.*  
—I have the lively satisfaction of copying from Napoleon III.'s own manuscript the following scattered reminiscences which he had put down on paper. What a loss that he never chose, for his friend's sake, to write or dictate a complete autobiography!

"*Reminiscences of my life.*—When a man has reached a certain age," he writes, "and recalls the earliest days of his childhood, he remembers only isolated scenes—those which most vividly struck his imagination. These form true pictures that have fixed themselves in the memory, but which it is impossible to co-ordinate.

"The earliest of my recollections goes back to my baptism. Let me say at once that I was baptized at the age of three, in 1810, in the Chapel of the Château of Fontainebleau. The Emperor was my godfather and the Empress Marie Louise my godmother.

"My next memory carries me to the house of

Malmaison. I can still see the Empress Joséphine in her *salon* on the ground floor, surrounding me with caresses and already flattering my conceit by the care she was at to draw attention to my clever sayings. For my grandmother *spoilt* me in every sense of the word, while my mother, on the contrary, from my tenderest infancy, took every pains to correct my faults and develop my good qualities. I remember how, once at Malmaison, we—my brother and I—were at liberty to do just what we liked. The Empress, who was passionately fond of plants and conservatories, allowed us to cut the sugar-canes to suck, and was always telling us to ask for whatever we wanted. One day, when she was thus exhorting us, on the eve of a birthday-feast, my brother, who was three years my elder and therefore more sentimental, asked for a watch with our mother's portrait. But I, when the Empress said, "You, Louis, ask for whatever will give you the most pleasure," I asked for leave to go and walk in the mud with the little street scamps. Do not deem this absurd, for all the time I was in France, where I lived till I was seven, it was always one of my most poignant regrets that we always drove in the streets, in a carriage with four or six horses. When, in 1815, before our departure from the capital, our tutors took us for a walk one day along the boulevard, I experienced the most lively sense of happiness of any I am able to remember.

"Like all children, but perhaps more than any others, soldiers attracted my admiring looks and were the subject of all my thoughts. Whenever at Malmaison I could escape from the drawing-room, I used invariably to hurry off to the main entrance-steps, where there were always two grenadiers of the Imperial Guard on sentry duty. One day, taking my stand at a window of the first entrance-hall on the ground-floor, I got into conversation with one of these veterans. The sentry, who knew who I was, answered me with a good-humoured laugh. I told him, I remember: 'I can do my little drill, too; I have a little gun of my own.' So the grenadier asked me to give the words of command, and I ordered him:



‘Present arms! . . . port arms . . . ground arms!’ while he went through all the successive motions to please me. Imagine my delight! Wishing to show my gratitude, I ran to a place where they had given us a store of biscuits. I took one and ran and put it in the grenadier’s hand. The fellow accepted it with a laugh, while I was overjoyed at his pleasure, veritably thinking I had pleased him beyond measure.

“I used often to go with my brother, who was three years older than myself, to breakfast with the Emperor. We were introduced into a room looking out on the Tuileries Gardens. Directly the Emperor appeared he would walk straight up to us, take us by the head with both hands and set us standing on the table. This unusual way of lifting us terrified our mother; Corvisart had assured her that this way of lifting a child was extremely dangerous.”

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*Later childhood.*—The Campaign of France, unexampled for heroism, a veritable and unique epic of history, pursued its course from January 25th to April 11th, 1814. The Emperor was struggling with a handful of conscripts against all Europe trampling over the Fatherland in its death-agony.

The *family council*, deaf to Hortense’s remonstrances, had decided on the Empress’s departure. Then the noble-hearted woman, the young mother, smothering her anguish for her children’s peril, sent for Comte Regnault de Saint-Jean-d’Angely :

“Tell the National Guard,” she bade him, “that, if they will undertake to defend Paris, I will remain here with my children. . . .”

Such words make us forget many weaknesses. Alas ! the Colonel of the Guard announced that Paris must fall. Only then did she resign herself to go. Louis Bonaparte, moreover, asked her to fly the capital. Still she hesitated ; she said again :

“Paris *must* be defended ! It must hold out till the Emperor’s coming.”

"The thing is impossible," replied M. de Saint-Jean-d'Angely, who had come back at evening. Take my word, Madame. The enemy already holds the main roads. Who knows even if you can get through?"

Then Hortense made up her mind. It was nine o'clock when they started. The two children were put in the first carriage, into which she got herself. In the second were seated M. and Mme d'Arjuzon, Mme de Mailly, and Louis's nurse. Mlle Cochelet and a maid, loaded with their mistress's jewels and diamonds, occupied the third, while women servants of the household followed in a last vehicle. At midnight they reached Glatigny, where they were to sleep. Suddenly through the darkness they heard cannon. It was the opening of the attack on Paris.

Hortense leapt out of bed, dressed unaided and in haste. "We must leave here at once," Mlle Cochelet came in to tell her.

"Yes, we cannot remain here any longer. . . . But, before going far, I must ascertain the result of the battle. . . . Suppose Paris repelled the foe? . . . Let us go to Trianon; there we shall get news from General Préval, who is in command at Versailles, and to whom we will make ourselves known."

So they made their way to Trianon. There General Préval attended them, but only to confess his slight confidence in the result of the struggle. . . . Before long a non-commissioned officer came hurrying up to warn Hortense that Trianon was no longer safe, and to say that General Préval begged her to leave it.

Her people, thinking Mme Bonaparte would spend the night at Trianon, had nearly all gone to Versailles. She set off without them and reached the high road, which was crowded with fugitives. "An incessant, confused noise," the Duchesse de Reggio, who saw this mournful Odyssey from her windows, wrote subsequently in her *Souvenirs*, "proclaimed, throughout the night, the passing of great numbers of men, horses, carriages, and presently daylight revealed the most amazing spectacle that was ever seen. The sight kept us motionless hour



after hour at our windows : what we saw passing before our eyes was the Empire—the Empire vanishing, with its pomps and its splendours. There were the Ministers, all in their coaches with six horses, carrying away, along with their portfolio of office, wife, children, jewels, livery ; there was the Council of State one and all, the archives, the crown diamonds, the offices of administration, etc. . . . And these *disjecta membra* of power and magnificence were intermingled in the road pell-mell with poor households who had piled up on a barrow whatever they had contrived to save from the homes they had abandoned to the pillage they felt sure would overwhelm the country.”

Hortense fell in with this lamentable procession and eventually reached Rambouillet, where she found assembled at the Château Louis, Joseph, Jérôme, Ex-Kings supping with anxious faces while waiting an opportunity to continue their flight.

Next day Hortense took the road for Navarre (not far from Evreux), where she arrived on April 2nd—at the very crisis of the Napoleonic tragedy. The 150,000 Allies had closed in round Paris in a circle of fire and iron. The 20,000 men under Marmont and Mortier, with Polytechnic students, National Guards, sick and disabled men even, had defended the place for twelve hours, heroically, desperately, on March 30th. Napoleon was within five hours of Paris. At Fromenteau, at ten at night, he hears with grief and stupefaction of the capitulation signed by Marmont, and next day of the supreme humiliation of the occupation of his capital.

The foe was brought to bay. The Allies had only to crowd in to the death. On April 1st the Senate appointed a Provisional Government, next day it declared Napoleon deposed from the throne, the right of hereditary abolished in his family, the people and army absolved from the oath of fealty.

For a brief moment Napoleon, in an access of rage, dreamt of marching upon the faithless city. Alas ! defection had invaded the army itself. . . . Then the Eagle folded his wings and signed the conditional abdication.



Next day it was to be abdication pure and simple. What hours must he have spent during these days, the mighty Captain, at last brought low !

It was, therefore, at Navarre that Joséphine and Hortense heard the news of the appalling disaster and the return of the Bourbons. M. de Maussion, auditor to the Council of State, attaché of the Duc de Bassano, brought them these terrible tidings in the middle of the night. Joséphine wept, half stupefied, hardly understanding. Hortense, whose energetic bearing on this occasion again calls for praise, declared she would accompany Napoleon to whatever prison his enemies might choose for him.

Was it simple loyalty, or did she love him still ?

The following day the Ex-Empress and Ex-Queen dismissed their household, keeping with them only a few necessary domestics. Hortense despatched Mlle Cochelet to Paris to discover what the Allies were proposing to do with her and her person.

On April 11th the Treaty of Fontainebleau settled, as all the world knows, the future fate of Napoleon and his family. Napoleon was to retain his title of Emperor and to receive, along with a revenue of two million francs, the island of Elba to be under his absolute sovereignty ; 200,000 francs a year were assigned to Louis and 400,000 to his wife.

Meantime Joséphine, having caught a chill in the woods of Montmorency, on May 23rd, during a walk with the King of Prussia, took to her bed and died on Whitsunday. Hortense fainted on hearing this sudden and shocking news, and was overwhelmed with grief for a long time ; it was only slowly and gradually she resumed her usual receptions. In time, however, she did return to the old routine, loving to hear herself still called "Queen Hortense" and seeking to form useful relations with royalist society. It was at this period she invited together, one day, Mme de Staël and Mme Récamier. . . .

In fact, life returned presently to its old course, now at Saint-Leu, now at the house of Malmaison. Hortense's children wondered to see the King of Prussia and the

Emperor of Russia ready to kiss them, for "were they not enemies?"

"They are generous enemies," their governess would explain. "They are kind to your mamma." It is very certain Hortense had no reason to complain.

While his brother showed himself a very noisy lad, little Louis, on the other hand, was a silent, quiet, pensive child. One day, when Alexander was at Malmaison, Oui-Oui took a little bell he highly valued and suddenly placed it in the Tsar's hand, taking to his heels the next moment.

"Why do you do that?" his mother asked him.

"It was Uncle Eugène gave it me. It is the only thing I have. So I wanted to give it to the Emperor, *who is kind to mamma!*"

An *enfant terrible's* words, perhaps. The Tsar laughed at the pretty impulse and put the toy as a charm on his watch-chain.

Mme de Staël also showed an interest in Hortense's boys, and inquired about their studies with the Abbé Bertrand. One day, after she was gone, Louis asked:

"That lady is very full of questions. Is that what they call *esprit*?"

In September of the same year Queen Hortense received a legal document. It was her husband claiming the custody of his children, or at least of the elder, whom he had already claimed of their mother in vain.

A famous trial followed. In the end the Court declared in the father's favour, so far as the elder was concerned, giving the Queen three months in which to deliver over her first-born to the care of Louis Bonaparte.

Hortense proceeded to put the children beyond the reach of her husband's agents. Then, suddenly, an extraordinary piece of news: Napoleon was leaving Elba and returning to France.

It was the opening of the Hundred Days.

It seems that, on learning these amazing tidings from Lord Kinnaid, Hortense turned livid and said:

"I deeply deplore the Emperor's determination. I would give all I possess to prevent his return to France,



for I am convinced there is no hope of success for him ; we shall have a deplorable civil war, and the Emperor may well find himself among the victims."

On the eve of the Emperor's departure for the war Hortense brought her children to him to say farewell. Little Louis noticed his uncle's high-wrought feelings (he was with General Soult), and, hiding his face on his knees, burst into sobs.

"Why do you cry ?" questioned the Emperor.

"Because you are going to the war. Don't go. The naughty Allies will kill you. Or else take me with you."

"Why does their governess speak to the poor lads about such things ?" the Emperor asked Hortense ; then, turning to Soult :

"Kiss the boy, Marshal. He has a good heart and a noble soul, and will one day, perhaps, be the hope of my race."

This scene remained a strongly marked memory in the Prince's mind, who himself told me the story. Nor did he ever forget the time when, after Waterloo, his mother entrusted the two, himself and Charles, to her dressmaker in the Boulevard Montmartre, Mme Tessier. For the first time he came to know the Paris streets and mingled with the common herd. It was a keen pleasure, no doubt, for he wrote enthusiastically about it to his mother.

Now Napoleon was at the end of his career, he wished to see "his nephews" once again. Hortense went to Mme Tessier's to fetch them, and brought them both with her to Malmaison.

The house and estate, on Joséphine's death, had become the property of her children. It was Hortense who welcomed the fallen Emperor there, and she proved herself, on this occasion, worthy of the task that had fallen to her. Some one reminded her of the insinuations that had been indulged in as to her relations with Napoleon and the risk she was running in occupying the same house. But she scorned the voice of scandal and continued to exhibit, in the most striking way, the grati-



tude and affection she felt for her father-in-law till his final departure and the exile that was to carry him beyond the ocean.

Little Louis wept bitterly when his uncle pressed him to his heart for the last time, and as if he had a presentiment he would never see him again.

The Emperor gone—for ever this time—Hortense returned to Paris, where her drawing-room became the rendezvous of the most distinguished Bonapartists, the very focus of the last hopes of a futile effort. . . . But the crowd was now by way of acclaiming the King returning from Ghent, and was even growing hostile to the "Duchesse de Saint-Leu," who determined to leave France. But a passport and money were indispensable. She sold a number of pictures. . . . As for the passport, she did not need it after all. Denounced as organizer of a military plot, she received orders, on July 19th, to quit the capital before the day was out.

At nine o'clock she was on her way into exile with her children. On the road she came near being mishandled by the populace, which made her responsible for the calamities of the invasion. The officer who had been ordered to accompany her, M. de Woyna, protected her gallantly. At Dijon the Royalists were for ill-treating her, and it was an Austrian guard that rescued her from the danger. At Aix she had the pleasure of seeing M. de Flahaut, who came to greet her and assure her of his devotion. At Geneva she was directed to leave the town there and then. M. de Woyna then proposed to go for fresh instructions. She withdrew to Aix to wait for these, harassed by a thousand annoyances on the part of the authorities.

The Ministers of the Allied Powers eventually authorized her to fix her abode in Switzerland under the surveillance of the diplomatic agents of the Holy Alliance. But the Swiss authorities raised difficulties as to these arrangements. In the interval Louis Bonaparte took advantage of her embarrassments to despatch the Baron de Zuiten to his wife to claim possession of his eldest son! The poor mother was forced to part with

Charles, amid what torrents of tears! Whereupon, broken by so many troubles, she fell into a condition of excessive weakness, which nobody pitied. The old wandering life began again. She arrived at Prégny on the Lake of Geneva, where she owned a little château. There gendarmes hemmed her in. The Sous-Préfet begged her to go. On December 1st she was at Payenne. A little later, at Morat, she was arrested as a vagabond and imprisoned for two days. She hoped to find at Constance the protection of her cousin, the Grand-Duke of Baden. The Grand-Duke, much annoyed to see his peace and quietness threatened, besought her to go elsewhere. Fortunately her good-natured cousin Stéphanie intervened and secured her permission to rest and recuperate from her fatigues for a time, at any rate, at the hotel. Early in 1816 she was living on the shore of Lake Constance, where a thief cheated her out of twenty thousand francs by passing himself off as an emissary from the friends of General Mouton-Duvernay, who was to be executed at Lyons. The fellow pretended that he was to help in the General's escape by corrupting his guards. However, better days and a time of more security were coming at last. The doctors having recommended the Duchess of Saint-Leu a course of goat's-milk, she removed to the Canton of Appenzell, where the Landamman received her obligingly.

"My mother, all through these days of flight, distress, and exile," the Emperor told me at a later date, "showed herself worthy of all admiration. As for me, the period has always remained in my memory as a strange, blurred nightmare. . . . I remember when they came to tear my brother from my mother's arms, I was so grieved that I fell ill; I actually had the jaundice, though not seriously. . . . Aix, Berne, Baden, Zurich, Serawenfeld . . . successive halting-places . . . all this in changing perspective before my eyes. . . . And the little house by the Lake of Constance . . . the wooden bridge . . . the windows . . . my word! those windows! . . . a perfect glass-house . . . the rooms were white-washed, and draughty. . . . The Abbé Bernard found it

to his taste, or at any rate found a bright word to say of it : 'Perfect, perfect ! My pupil will have plenty of fresh air, and I can keep him always under my eye ! ' "

The Prince was seven. His *childhood* ends there. He had had experience enough of life to justify us in dating from this point the commencement of boyhood and youth.



## CHAPTER III

### BOYHOOD AND YOUTH ; ARENABERG

1815—1830

The Emperor in his boyhood : ideas and impressions—Early lessons—Arenaberg—The Thurgau, a charming country-side—Louis Napoléon at Augsburg—Hortense at Rome : with Madame Récamier at the Prince Torlonia's ball—Death of Prince Eugène, Hortense's brother—His character and talents—Louis Napoléon at Thun—Attends the École d'Artillerie—Wishes to join the Russian army against the Turks—The Revolution of July—Refused all opportunity of participating—Hortense's two sons resolve to join the Italian Revolutionaries.

*Sayings of Prince Napoleon.*—The Emperor one day told me :

“I have retained a very lively impression of an hour when, about my seventh year, the idea occurred to me, for the first time and very clearly, that my destiny was not the same as other children's, that it held something greater and more serious ; but I cannot distinguish whether this gave me a feeling of pride or of fear—perhaps both together. In any case, I had already illustrious names and important events to look back upon in my past. I knew that my grandmother, who was dead, had been an Empress, that my mother had been a Queen, and my father a King—and my uncles had been Kings too. I grew accustomed then to the notion that I too, like them, would one day be Emperor or King—I did not quite know which, though “Emperor” sounded the finer. I knew Napoleon was at St. Helena, on a rock, and he sometimes haunted me like a phantom. . . . All this filled my little head with gloom and sunshine and left me pensive.”

What the Prince did not tell me, out of modesty, but which I have learnt since, is the fact that he was very good-natured. One day he came home barefoot, in shirt-sleeves, through the snow and mud. They began scolding him ; but he told them—and it was quite true—that, meeting a poor family and having no money, he had given his shoes to one of the children and his coat to another.

Napoleon III. always showed a kind, pitiful heart ; he was always dreaming of the amelioration of the unhappy condition of society.

"The monarch who should abolish pauperism in his dominions," he often declared to me, "would have benefited his country more than if he had surfeited it with military glory."

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*Arenaberg and Augsburg.*—Hardly had she returned from Appenzell, whither the Duchess of Saint-Leu had gone alone to follow a mountain-air cure, hardly were Louis Napoléon's studies begun, before the Grand-Duke of Baden, himself threatened by others, insisted that they must leave Constance. The poor mother, driven from every refuge, sought a new home, and the idea occurred to her to buy the property of Arenaberg, for which she paid, I believe, thirty-five thousand florins.

I have been many times to Arenaberg. It is a charming spot, where the Queen only finally took up her abode in 1821. Vast woods surround it. The whole of the Canton (the Thurgau), indeed, pleases me beyond measure, with its mountains, much less lofty, less wild than those that fill the savage Switzerland of rushing torrents and icy peaks ; with its lakes, of which Constance is the largest and noblest, with its orchards and woods that combine the beauty of fertility with the charm of pleasant solitude ; with its vineyards and its industries, its aristocratic-democratic government, its agreeable climate, and its inhabitants that match the climate. Arenaberg is within four leagues of Frauenfeld, the capital of the district.

While waiting till Arenaberg was ready for occupation,

Hortense and her son went to live for a while at Augsburg. There was a good boys' college there. There Louis Napoléon attended the classes in German and made his first communion.

\* \* \*

*Hortense at Rome and Louis Napoléon at Thun.*—Queen Hortense spent a great part of the year at Arenaberg, but for the winter she preferred Rome, for which she took a liking, herein following the wish expressed by Napoleon I., who ardently desired his family to form connection with the Roman aristocracy.

It was in 1824 that she met Mme Récamier there, the year of the famous *bal Torlonia*. An eye-witness has given me the following account :

After the Duchess of Saint-Leu and Mme Récamier had become quite intimate friends, the latter proposed to the Ex-Queen of Holland that they should both of them go to the masked ball given by the Prince Torlonia, a banker and a friend of the Bonaparte family.

The proposal was agreed to, and they decided each to wear a domino of white satin, so as to make it impossible to distinguish one from the other, or at any rate that only friends should be admitted to the secret of the slight mark of difference there was between the two, which consisted merely in this, that Mme Récamier had a wreath of roses pinned on her domino, while the Queen carried a bouquet.

The Ex-King of Westphalia, Jérôme, escorted Hortense, and the Duc de Laval-Montmorency squired Mme Récamier. Everybody was in the wildest, maddest spirits, and quips and cranks of all sorts were not wanting. The most amusing, as well as the most extraordinary incident, and one which formed the subject of endless tittle-tattle in fashionable drawing-rooms, was due to a little plot between the two ladies which some people deemed of doubtful taste. They found an opportunity to exchange a word or two *en passant*, in spite of the fact that the proprieties of political etiquette demanded they should not know each other in public, and agreed, by way



of a little joke, to counterchange their distinctive attributes, thanks to which the curious public had already discovered which was which. At the same time they exchanged gentlemen, the Queen going off on the arm of Louis XVIII.'s ambassador, her companion on that of the Ex-King of Westphalia. In consequence of these manœuvres one was mistaken for the other. The Royalists thronged with their deferential greetings about the daughter-in-law of Napoleon, while her accomplice found herself the centre of the confidences and civilities of all the Bonapartists in Rome. The two ladies kept up the mystification a long time ; when at last discovered, it set almost everybody laughing, but keenly wounded a few foolish people, who declared themselves compromised by this harmless frolic.

It was likewise at Rome, and in the same year (1824), that Queen Hortense received news of the death of her brother Eugène, whose decease caused her very poignant grief.

I never knew Eugène de Beauharnais, but I have heard often of his high military qualities. Napoleon, who had quickly noted his promise, early took him as aide-de-camp, and raised him by successive steps to the rank of General, the dignity of Prince, and finally the office of Viceroy. He administered Italy excellently, and the Emperor, pleased with his success, gave him the daughter of the King of Bavaria, adopted him, and named him heir presumptive to the crown of Italy. He showed brilliant abilities in the campaign of 1809, won in person the battle of Raab and contributed largely to the victory of Wagram. In Russia, his retreat on Madgeburg was universally admired. On the fall of the Emperor, it was proposed to him to keep his crown on condition that he separated his cause from that of the vanquished hero. He rejected the offer with indignation, and withdrew, under the name of the Duke of Leuchtenberg, to join his father-in-law, where he lived till he was struck down by an apoplectic fit. His six children contracted exalted marriages—one son with Doña Maria, Queen of Portugal, and the other with a daughter of the Emperor Nicholas ;

the daughters with Bernadotte, the Prince of Hohenzollern-Heckingen, Dom Pedro, Emperor of Brazil, and the Count of Würtemberg respectively.

In 1826 Louis Napoléon quitted Augsburg and went to reside in Switzerland, at Thun, to follow the artillery and engineering courses there.

"I grew passionately devoted to my work," he assured me, "and it is perhaps due to my good old master, M. Vieillard, that I owe my taste for these specialized studies. . . . Remember, I have published a number of books on the subject,—ample proof of the interest I have always taken in it.<sup>1</sup> Besides which, my mother herself pointed out to me the necessity of perfecting myself in technical studies. It was Dufour, an old retired Colonel of Engineers under the Empire, who instructed me in this science. At Thun my time was very fully occupied. At a quarter before six in the morning the roster was called; we went straight to the polygon to the beat of drums and stayed there till dinner. At table I sat next to Colonel Dufour. In the afternoon, to the polygon again from a quarter to three till half-past seven. Thus we had barely two hours' free time left us all day; and then there were notes and drawings to be recopied."

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*First promptings of warlike ambition.*—In 1829 Louis Napoléon was on the point of setting out to fight the Turks. He wrote to his father on January 19th asking his approval of the project.

The latter, however, strongly dissuaded him from undertaking any such enterprise, concluding his letter with the words: "No, we should never go to war save for one's own country."

Louis was bitterly disappointed, but respected his father's wishes. Fevered with the longing to be up and doing, he was still looking for an opportunity when the

<sup>1</sup> *Manuel de l'artillerie à l'usage des officiers de la république helvétique* (Manual of Artillery for the use of Officers of the Helvetic Republic), 1836; *Études sur le passé et l'avenir de l'artillerie* (Studies in the Past and Future of Artillery), 1846, 1851; *Histoire du canon dans les armées modernes* (History of Cannon in Modern Armies), 1848.



THE EMPRESSES EUGÉNIE AND JOSÉPHINE, AND QUEEN HORTENSE.

From a print of 1854—"Les Anges de la France."





Revolution of July broke out, an epoch when Bonapartism and Liberalism were united and indeed indistinguishable, in opposition to the principle of Monarchism, which tottered under this mighty assault of popular enthusiasm. Napoléon Louis was at that time in Tuscany, engaged in industrial pursuits, Louis Napoléon in Switzerland at the military school, where he was pursuing his studies in the sciences of artillery and engineering. Their mother received enthusiastic letters from them : "The tricolour floats in France !" wrote Louis exuberantly. "Happy they who have been the first to restore its old-time glory ! . . . I trust we shall now be suffered to enjoy the rights of French citizens. How happy it will make me to see soldiers wearing the tricolour cockade !"

Unfortunately the law of proscription of 1816 was not abrogated, even when, on September 2nd, 1830, the Act of Penalties against the regicides was done away with.

Then it was that, despairing of readmission to France and any chance of winning renown in their native land, the two young Napoleons resolved, on learning of the turn of events in Italy, to take a hand in them and so force their way to the front.

## CHAPTER IV

### NAPOLEON A "CARBONARO" IN ITALY

1830, 1831

Was Louis Napoléon a *Carbonaro*? the Comte Arese's opinion—Why the two sons of Queen Hortense were fascinated by the Italian movement for Independence—Hortense's attitude—She goes to Italy—The Insurrection of Bologna; breaks out the day following the election of Pope Gregory XVI.—The two Princes drawn into the insurrectionary ranks by the influence of Menotti—Remonstrances of Louis Bonaparte and Jérôme—The rising in the Romagna—Napoleon III. describes these days of youthful enthusiasm—A bitter blow; the would be patriots fly to Ancona—Death of Napoléon Louis—Hortense's account of the circumstances—The truth according to the Baron d'Ambès: he was assassinated—Flight of the Queen and her surviving son—Perilous and romantic adventures—The Prince disguised as a lackey—Crosses the French frontier and arrives in Paris.

"*Was Louis Napoléon a 'Carbonaro'?*"—This question I put frankly to my friend Count Arese<sup>1</sup> who knew the Empress personally before I did. The Senator replied:

He was not at first, but he became one inevitably. Not at first, because he detested factions of every sort and kind. He became one later when the name was applied to all who were for driving the Austrians out of Italy.

The French Revolution of July was admittedly the mother of the Italian movement. Hortense's two sons were passionately stirred in favour of this noble outburst of Liberalism, just as other young men of that day dreamed dreams of vowing themselves to the liberation of other oppressed countries—Greece, or Poland. Moreover, they felt themselves Italians by blood, and the elder



brother was engaged at the time in an industrial enterprise at Florence in conjunction with his father.

Napoléon Louis, married to his cousin-german Charlotte, second daughter of Joseph Bonaparte, was then twenty-eight years of age. He was, I have been told, a young man of intelligence, well built in person, good-natured and energetic.

"One must be a man before aspiring to be a Prince," he used to say ; "exalted rank is only an obligation the more. . . ."

Trouble was imminent. As early as February an expedition was organizing in Savoy in conjunction with bands of Italian refugees at Lyons, where they had met with a warm reception ; but the French Government prohibited any further steps. Nevertheless, the agitation went on unabated. Was Hortense hoping to seize an opportunity at last for her sons to win fame and fortune ? Did she urge them to join the ranks of the malcontents ? I am inclined to believe so.

In October 1830 she leaves Arenaberg for Italy, where her two children were at that moment with their father !

In the middle of November, after spending a fortnight at Florence, whence Louis Bonaparte, always so agreeable as a husband, had gone off with his younger boy to Rome under pretence of business, the Queen and her elder son arrive in their turn in the Eternal City. On the road they encounter Louis Bonaparte at Bolsena, call a halt, and discuss the events of the time, and the father, anxious as to his son's political leanings, expresses his wish to see them remain strangers to the movement in preparation.

Reaching Rome in due course, the Queen awaited developments.

On February 2nd, 1831, Cardinal Capellari was elected Pope, under the name of Gregory XVI., and on the 6th of the same month broke out the insurrection of Bologna. Hortense, in no little anxiety, not knowing where her sons were or what they were doing, left Rome and hurried to Florence in search of news.

In spite of all dissuasions and difficulties, her sons had

joined the revolutionary movement under the inspiration of Menotti, the patriot of Modena. That leader had asked their help and the all-powerful prestige of their name. Flattered by the proposal, dazzled by the gleam of reflected glory which, falling on them, might bring them into the light of fame, they had agreed.

The movement spread rapidly, forced the pontifical troops to evacuate Bologna, and next day compelled the Prolegate, Monseigneur Gazzoli, to confide at Forlì the government to the Gonfalonier, assisted by sixty citizens, and the same day at Ravenna to a provisional commission, while at Rimini the people sported the Italian tricolour (red, white and green) cockade. A little later Urbino and Pesaro followed suit and declared themselves free, and the French Ambassador at Rome wrote to the Minister of Foreign Affairs at Paris : " I do not see what means the Papal Government can employ to re-establish its authority over the provinces it has lost."

Meantime, deaf to their father's commands and their uncle's remonstrances, encouraged by their mother's manifest approbation, Hortense's two sons had joined the ranks of the insurgents, who had welcomed them with enthusiasm.

" It was a perfect madness," Napoleon would tell me when he talked over his memories of those wild days. " We were welcomed as liberators. The patriotic enthusiasm of those gallant fellows enveloped us, intoxicated us. For myself, I had never before lived with the like intensity. It is in such circumstances one feels what a common faith for a good and noble cause can do."

He would continue sadly :

" But we were a trifle saddened, all the same, to think that our joy was won at the price of our family's distress and disapproval. Our uncle Jérôme begged us to renounce our plans, which were offensive to the Holy Father. He sent us a letter full of positive supplication by the hands of one of his officers, M. von Stölting. In despair of moving us by his representations, the letter finished up with this proposal :

" At any rate, let the insurgents explain their wishes !



The Pope does not know what they want. If you will present their claims, I undertake to transmit them to his Holiness."

Prince Napoléon Louis consulted his comrades, who accepted him as intermediary to express their wishes. A paper was drawn up, written out, and handed to M. von Stölting, who informed the Queen and set out for Rome instead of returning to her.

The situation was getting strained. From Foligno to Civita-Castellana the defence was already organized. Jérôme has letters written to Bologna to say that his nephews, far from helping on the cause, are a hindrance to its success. Cardinal Fesch writes to General Armandi, their military superior, to recall them. European diplomacy was disturbed and taking measures. The Austrian army was advancing. . . . What happened then ?

The two Princes withdrew to Ancona suddenly. Why ? Armandi had issued orders to that effect ! Both are furious and protest indignantly. They are replaced by General Sercognani. And, instead of fighting, they are forced to fly disguised before the pursuit of the police !

"I have never quite understood what occurred at that time," the Emperor told us, Arese and myself, at a later date. . . . "Doubtless it was all sorts of representations on the part of my father and uncle that finally induced General Armandi to come to this strange resolution ; the latter pretended that our presence would prove offensive to the French Government and deter it from helping the Liberal cause in Italy.

Be that as it may, the two brothers leave Civita-Castellana. Their mother hastens to rejoin them. She knows the Austrians are all ready to enter the papal territory. Then her sons will be thrown into prison, executed perhaps. There is no doubt that, forgetting a brief moment of ambition, she was now ruled by sheer terror. She quitted Florence on March 10th, professedly on the way to Ancona, but in reality going to Foligno, whence she wrote to tell her children she was waiting for them in that town. The letter never reached its destination.



This is easily explained. Read what she writes in her *Mémoires* : "I was on the road to Ancona, full of trouble and agitation, my heart bursting with dismal forebodings, when, the first post after Foligno, a *calèche* drew up beside my carriage. A man I did not know stepped out. I trembled, I knew not why. He came from my children. 'The Prince Napoléon is ill,' he told me. 'He has the measles !' I exclaimed. 'Yes ; he is asking for you.' At these words, 'he is asking for you,' I cried out in alarm, 'He is very ill, then ?' and I turned back there and then."

She retraced her steps ; but, at every halting-place, her ears were horrified by exclamations of "Napoleon is dead !" "It cannot be," she faltered distractedly. "Heaven is just ; that would be too much. No, no, he will not die ; God will give him back to me !"

She reached Pesaro—and Louis Napoléon threw himself in her arms, crying through his bursting tears :

"I have lost my brother ! I have lost my best friend. But for you I should have died too on his body, which I refused to leave."

In these words Queen Hortense relates the death of her son as having occurred as the result of an attack of measles, on March 17th, at Forli, which next day fell into the power of the Austrian bayonets.

Why must I throw doubts on her narrative ? Why am I haunted by a conviction that the truth was very different ? I hardly dare to formulate my belief ; but the real truth is the young Prince died, not of the epidemic, but was assassinated !

I know that M. de Roccassera, Napoléon Louis's comrade in arms, has given an account in agreement with the narrative of the unhappy mother, and that as early as April 1831. I know it is hardly right to accuse Queen Hortense of direct falsehood, albeit there would be so many excuses for her ! But other evidence, equally authentic, justifies me in affirming that the elder brother of Napoleon III. was killed, and killed by his own associates !

He was put to death because, having agreed to revolt

against the clerical power, he nevertheless refused to march straight on Rome, shaken as he was by the recriminations of his family. He was assassinated because they suspected him from that time of treason towards the cause of freedom. He was condemned at a general meeting of the conspirators in consequence of the violent denunciation of Orsini, father of the man who in later days attempted the life of Napoleon III., and was struck down by a bullet or a dagger-thrust in some tavern at Forli, one night. . . .

Such, I fear, is the actual truth. Doubtless it is less romantic than a death by disease contracted in the course of the struggle for liberty, less brilliant by far than to have fallen in fair fight on the field of battle. Alas ! great men are not always destined to a glorious end. None the less do we owe a debt of tender récollection to the good and gallant son of Queen Hortense, the second she lost, and in this case so tragically !

\* \* \*

*An exciting escape.*—It was two years after the Italian insurrection of 1831 that I learned full particulars of the part taken in it by Hortense's sons, the death of the elder brother, and the flight of the younger with his mother. And in this connection I am bound to confess that the Emperor never supplied me with adequate information on the details of the subject. Accordingly, I have completed my account from various sources—from books, from inquiries, from the confidences of friends.

Hardly was Napoléon Louis interred ere his unhappy mother fled in all haste with Louis Napoléon, hoping to steal a march on the Austrians. At Ancona she calls a halt. She sees the enemy's flotilla in the Adriatic. It should have been possible to get to sea ; but there are only two vessels ready, and the town is crammed with insurgents. Then, to brim the cup of ill-fortune, her son falls ill with measles !

She must resort to subterfuge, remain there unknown to everybody, nurse the patient, and, after the town is captured—an event which took place on March 26th—contrive



a plan of escape, and this in spite of the fact that the General in command of the Austrian army has established his headquarters in the very house occupied by Queen Hortense, the finest in the town !

That intrepid mother displayed the highest qualities of skill and devotion, and actually found an issue from the dramatic predicament. On March 27th her attendants made such a well-counterfeited show of all starting for Corfu that the French Ambassador found himself able to write : " A Jessieu vessel sailed last night for Corfu, with thirty-nine passengers, some of the most deeply compromised individuals, among others the son of Louis Bonaparte, the other having died at Forli. The mother is still here."

The doctor, who was admitted to the secret, came to visit the patient, pretending all the time to be attending the Queen. Louis Napoléon never raised his voice above a whisper for fear General Geppert, on the other side of the partition wall, should overhear it and know it for a man's. When at last he was well, the Queen went to see the General and asked him for a permit to go to Leghorn and from thence to Malta, to meet her son, who was to rejoin her there coming from Corfu. Baron Geppert acquiesced, and the Queen advised him that she intended to set out at a very early hour so as to hear Mass at Notre-Dame-de-Lorette, a church situated five leagues from Ancona and a celebrated place of pilgrimage.

What a romance it all is ! Queen Hortense had posed as an English lady travelling with her two sons when she had come to recover the latter. Now one is gone ! The young Baron Zeppi agrees to fill his place. For the time being Louis Napoléon and he disguise themselves as lackeys. And so the little party files off while the soldiers are still asleep !

Thanks to Geppert's permit, the carriages pursued their way without let or hindrance. Loretto, Valentino, Perugia, are left behind. They are in Tuscany, at Sienna, at Lucca. At the inns precautions are redoubled. The young men have abandoned their lackey's livery and are



once more "the English lady's two sons." Presently they reach Seravezza. . . .

"What poignant emotions," His Majesty would exclaim as he told me the story, "when we arrived at this pretty place which my brother was so fond of, where he had a country house, a paper-mill, and marble-works, and where he often came in the summer."

At last Modena came in view :

"This was the critical point, the principality that presented more perils than any other. If recognized and arrested there, I risked my life ! Once more the General's permit served us. . . ."

Here is an amusing passage in the Queen's *Mémoires* : "All the same, it was very reckless of us to pass ourselves off as English people when not one of us, except my son, could speak a word of the language, and even in his case his French accent was easily recognized. This was very soon brought home to us.

"A *calèche* drew up in front of us ; a man sprang out and came forward to my travelling-carriage, saw it contained two ladies, and ran to the other. He thought he was speaking to fellow-countrymen and asked, in English, where the English Minister Taylor was to be found, as he had urgent despatches for him. My son, speaking in the same language, gave him the information he desired. He thanked him, adding :

"I must ask pardon for my mistake. I took you for Englishmen !"

Modena safely passed, the fugitives arrived in succession at Massa, Genoa, Nice, Antibes. At last they were nearing the borders of France.

A little while and they were in Paris, and settled in the Place Vendôme, at the Hôtel de Holland.

## CHAPTER V

### IMPERIAL AMBITIONS ; THE BARON D'AMBÈS FIRST MAKES THE FUTURE EMPEROR'S ACQUAINTANCE

1831—1833

The dates marking successive phases of Queen Hortense and Louis Napoléon's ambitions in the direction of winning back the throne of France: May 1831, anniversary of the death of Napoleon I.; July 1832, death of the Duc de Reichstadt (the "King of Rome")—First meeting of the Baron d'Ambès with Prince Louis Napoléon, August 1833—Political anticipations—Widomski—Walks and talks—Constance—Visitors at Arenaberg—The Prince as host—Dislikes flatterers—Interior of the Château—A little dinner—In the park—The Prince's conversation—A life-long enthusiasm.

*May 1831.*—Queen Hortense, Duchess of Saint-Leu, flying from Austrian oppression, once more trod the soil of France—forbidden ground to the Bonapartes. Nevertheless, she ventured to come to Paris and beseech King Louis Philippe to receive her. She protracted her stay as long as she could, gratified by the Bonapartist manifestations of April 16th, and looking forward to May 5th, the anniversary of Napoleon's death. It was of set purpose that she had taken up her lodging in the Place Vendôme. On May 5th she beheld the crowd throng into the square. She saw it full of sympathy for the victor of Austerlitz, and half thought of coming out, presenting her son to the populace, and announcing who he was. . . . Unluckily that very day M. d'Houdetot came with a message from the King asking her to take her departure, the police having reported that the Queen was visiting the barracks and introducing to the officers the Emperor's heir.

*August 1831.*—Compelled to quit Paris, where an understanding was feared of the Bonapartist and Republican parties against the July Monarchy, where Louis Napoléon had seen the people scattering flowers at the foot of the Vendôme Column, the Duchesse de Saint-Leu departed for England.

There she made the acquaintance of Lord and Lady Holland. She and her friends were assured that the English Ministry (Lord Holland was a member of it) would not now oppose the ending of the exile of the Imperial family. When she remarked :

“The memory people have preserved of us in France is greatly weakened.”

“It is something if they remember at all,” was Lord Holland’s uncompromising reply.

*July 1832.*—The Duc de Reichstadt died on the 22nd at Schönbrunn. Exiled with Marie Louise, kept under surveillance by Metternich, a dreamer and a neuropath rather than a man of action, this prisoner—for he was really and truly a prisoner—amid the sumptuous surroundings of the Austrian Court, was never a dangerous rival for Louis Napoléon.

The latter regarded him with much affection. Here is a letter (it belongs to the Empress, but I have been enabled to procure a copy) of the Prince to the Duke, dated 1830 :

“MY DEAR COUSIN,—We have been greatly troubled for some time past by your illness. I apply to everybody for news of your state of health, and the uncertainty in which their indirect accounts leave me occasions me the greatest anxiety.

“If you knew all the attachment we feel for you, you could then imagine our grief at having no direct relations with one whom we have been brought up to love as a relation and to honour as the son of the Emperor Napoleon.

“Ah ! if the presence of a nephew of your father’s could be of any benefit to you, if the cares of a friend who bears the same name as yourself could relieve your sufferings, I should be too happy to have been able in any way



to be useful to one who is the object of my whole-hearted affection.

"I hope the persons into whose hands this letter will come before it reaches you will have humanity enough to let you receive the expression of an attachment that cannot be indifferent to you."<sup>1</sup>

In any case, the death of the King of Rome necessarily opened before Louis Napoléon's eyes a new horizon. It so far disturbed the equanimity of the Holy Alliance that it now put the Pretender (the Prince could claim this title henceforth) under surveillance by a Secretary of the French Embassy in London, who came to settle at Volsberg, quite close to Arenaberg. . . .

From that time forth the Queen regarded her son as a sovereign. Both encouraged the thought that the throne of France must now be the object of their aims. The Prince actually submitted to Chateaubriand, who came to see him in Switzerland, his famous *Réveries politiques*, in which was to be read this projected Constitution :

The three Powers of the State would be : the People, the Legislative Body, and the Emperor.

The People would have the elective power and that of sanction.

The Legislative Body would have the deliberative power.

The Emperor would have the executive power.

It should be remarked that the Queen, and the Queen alone, urged Louis Napoléon along this path, for, of the rest, Jérôme was lethargic, a lover of peace and quietness ; Louis Napoléon a martyr to gout, of literary leanings ; Joseph, now returned from America, a travelled Montesquieu ; Lucien, a well-intentioned scholar and man of letters. All were oblivious of the days of past glory. The Prince, for his part, was preparing himself by study for the great part he was resolved to play in the future.

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*My first meeting with Prince Louis Napoléon : August 1833.*—The year will ever be one of the most fortunate

<sup>1</sup> As a matter of fact, the letter never reached its address, being intercepted like the rest.

of my life, the month one of the most fondly cherished in my memory. For the first time it was given me to see with my own eyes a Prince of whom I had certainly heard much already, but to whom I was ready to accord only a secondary degree of attention. It should be mentioned that till that later period I had given but little thought to politics and that, as a matter of theory, I hardly knew to which party I meant to devote myself, all offering to my perhaps over-critical mind a patchwork of beauties and defects inextricably mingled.

If, I told myself, we could discover a formula intermediate between Monarchy without adequate check, and Democracy which cannot well be left unlimited and unbridled, would not this be the right road to follow to constitute the best government? No doubt, Constitutional Monarchy, on a first examination, seems to fulfil these conditions. But it is still lacking in too many elements of the popular will. It must, at all costs, be by universal suffrage that the Head of the Nation is chosen, provided always that, after being nominated by the People, he afterwards shows wisdom enough to dominate the People and not let himself be led by it. Sprung thus from the very body of France, like a son born of his mother's womb, none can subsequently reproach him for acts of which he must be the originator, while directing them in harmony with the needs of the nation. A head of the government, then, strong yet at the same time popular, such was the consummation to which my meditations pointed when chance brought me into contact with M. Widomski, a Polish refugee living at Constance, in the very same house as myself.

Now it so happened M. Widomski is received as a guest at the Château of Arenaberg.

What charming walks we had had together, Casimir Widomski and I, in that delightful country of the Thurgau where everything contributes to the pleasure of the eye! now losing ourselves in the ancient forests or among the wide champaigns, now roaming like common tourists in the streets of the old town where John Huss and Jerome of Prague heroically mounted the pile.



Our talks were endless. It turned out our ideas had much in common. And so it was I learned that these same ideas haunted the mind of Prince Louis Napoléon.

Nay, as we took our walks abroad in Constance, the very buildings seemed to justify our conclusions; that Florentine Rathaus, decorated in the style of the Fuggerhaus at Augsburg, that Hall of the Butcher's Guild, are living tokens surviving to our own day of popular energy, popular control, popular rights!

"No one," Widomski assured me, "holds this cult of nationality more fervently than Louis Napoléon. He is the very man France would seem to need—a name to conjure with, a temperament sentimental yet serious, a hand strong to hold the reins of government."

"I should very much like to know him," I ventured at last.

"Shall I speak of you to him?"

"It would be giving me real pleasure."

"He is plain and unaffected, a young man full of cordiality to young men; moreover, he is always enchanted to increase the number of his friends—friends who understand him, who are willing to trust him."

"Nothing more natural!"

Casimir Widomski at the first opportunity, that is to say three days afterwards, gave me the Prince's answer, who was agreeable to have me presented to him.

I could not contain myself for delight. I knew a visitor at Arenaberg might at any time meet the Princesse de la Moskowa and the Duchesse de Raguse, Comte Demidoff and the Baron Desportes, the Comtesse Sermaise and Mme de Faverolles, Colonel Brake, and Mme de Girardin, writers like M. de Chateaubriand, M. Casimir Delavigne, and M. Alexandre Dumas, painters, savants, exiles—a whole world of distinguished folks. I was twenty. I knew very few people. It was a unique opportunity to enter a *milieu* at once interesting, advantageous, and full of possible distinctions now and for the future.

It was the day before yesterday we set out, Widomski and I, for Arenaberg, and to-day I am hurriedly jotting down my impressions.



To begin with, the way there is delightful—a succession of woods, vineyards, châteaux. The road ascends almost from the beginning, allowing all the way a whole series of picturesque views. In the distance, on the far side of the lake, Würtemberg and the Black Forest, its dark-blue ridges relieved against a beautiful clear sky. Behind, Constance, with its steeples, towers, and roofs. At our feet the lovely Lake of Constance, an azure banner stretching between the browns and greens of a richly fertile country. The air is light and soft. True, it is very early in the day. We chose to go on foot, and the distance, though not excessive, is considerable. At Ermatingen we took a footpath which led us to a winding ravine crossed by a bridge. Soon we were in the park of Arenaberg, abounding in flowers and leaping brooks. The sight of the château, modest but elegant, set my heart beating.

But my emotion was redoubled, till I felt my cheeks turning purple, when Widomski presented me to the Prince, who happened at that moment to be strolling in the garden, among the hortensias, in company with Commandant Parquin.

Luckily, as it happened, I had met on one or two previous occasions this officer, who was the owner of Volsberg, an establishment, half château, half boarding-house, in the near neighbourhood of Arenaberg, the very place where an emissary of Talleyrand's had settled the year before, after the death of the King of Rome, to keep an eye on Louis Napoléon.

"Oh! so it's you," exclaimed M. Parquin, on hearing my name, giving me his hand after the Prince had spoken his gracious word of welcome. . . . "Upon my word! we have several times exchanged bows without really making each other's acquaintance!"

I hardly knew what to say. But the ice was quickly broken, for now the Prince, with a smile, complimented me on my long tramp a-foot, and a climb that must have tired me.

I reassured him on this head, and proceeded to congratulate him on his writings—I deemed this my very

first obligation, indeed the reason of being there—when interrupting me, he took the conversation into his own hands to draw my attention to the fine view and his fine flower-beds. He pointed to great banks of hortensias and told me :

“I love the flowers beyond measure . . . they have about them something royal. . . .”

“Imperial,” I put in softly.

“Are you a flatterer by any chance ?” observed the Prince, with a smile in which I seemed to catch a gleam of mockery.

I bit my lips, annoyed at having really let slip a trivial speech that might be thought servile. I stood silent and confused, blushing again hotly.

Widomski fortunately came to the rescue, himself bringing out the sentence I had not been able to utter—that I was acquainted with the Prince’s political ideas and agreed with them.

“But not to please me ?” Louis Napoléon had the cruelty to add to his first little stab. But, instantly resuming a serious tone, he went on : “We must never hold opinions *de convenance*, but opinions we really believe. It was the great weakness of monarchical systems that they begat defenders who thought of their own private interest first and not those of the nation. And it will be the great strength of such a system of government as I dream of to rule for the People, with the People, and not with a handful of greedy Ministers, for a handful of courtiers. Since you believe these ideas to be just, sir,” he concluded, turning to me, “devote your energies to defending them and making them better known. When they shall be the public opinion of France, France will be in a position to become the model government of the whole world.”

I assured him of my devotion, carefully avoiding this time all exaggerated or flattering expressions. He seemed satisfied with my answers, and said :

“Come, sir, now, I am going to introduce you to my friends.”

The latter were in the Queen’s study—she was away



at the time—engaged in discussing the famous *Mémoires*, which had appeared two years before, in 1813, but a second edition of which was to be issued by Levavas seur in the current year.

We were conducted through several handsome rooms, in which I admired a very remarkable portrait (by Prud'hon) of the Empress Joséphine half reclining on the grass in the agreeable shade of a clump of trees, other portraits of the Imperial family and a bust which Widomski told me afterwards was that of Byron; then we passed through a room containing the library, the rich effect and the artistic knick-knacks of which amazed me. . . . Every one was most affable to me, and the Prince was so good as to ask me to stay to dinner.

I stammered my excuses and thanks.

"In our exile," he assured me in a voice not free from emotion, "every Frenchman who crosses our threshold is a bit of the fatherland coming to us. Far from being an annoyance, it is very agreeable to us to receive these marks of sympathy, which afford us consolation, and help as well."

I understood what lay beneath the words and replied :

"Prince, I know you are stout-hearted enough to find the consolation you need above all in yourself; but what I can offer you is the guarantee that I shall do everything to assure the success of your legitimate hopes."

He thanked me, and soon after we sat down to table. I found myself in company with M. Vieillard, an ex-Ambassador whose name I have forgotten, Mlle Mahuzier, daughter of a physician at Strassburg, a Pole a friend of Widomski, and an Italian, who told me his title through his nose, but it has quite escaped me. A family dinner, in fact, where the conversation turned on the daily life of the château, the books the Prince was reading, and the studies he was pursuing. He talked much of his *Considérations politiques et militaires sur la Suisse*, then in publication, and spoke of free Helvetia with enthusiastic and well-reasoned praises.

I found inexpressible pleasure in his unaffected, un-



studied conversation. But I noticed that his accent was affected by his habitual use of the German language, as I afterwards remarked to Widomski.

After the meal we all adjourned together to the park. The Prince drew my attention to the magnificent panorama to be enjoyed from where we stood. Below, the reach of the Lake of Constance called the Lower Lake, and to the right the Great Lake, over whose surface moved white wings that the sunlight made more luminous still. A haze was beginning to enshroud the glades of the Black Forest. From a certain spot could be just made out, set amid the richest of landscapes, the Falls of Laufen. A quiet, all-embracing melancholy brooded over the solitude, where rose, not far off, the Château of Engensberg, lately built by Eugène de Beauharnais.

The Prince said to me at one point of our conversation, which was still on politics :

"There are in the People enormous reserves of power, unsuspected energies. It is only needful to exploit it, like a career. . . . Don't mistake me," he resumed, fearing I might have misunderstood one word in his sentence : "I mean to say we can extract from it as much good as evil, make it helpful to its own prosperity as easily as lead it to work its own ruin. There is infinite wealth there, but coarse and crude, like gold unseparated from the matrix. It must be daintily and delicately freed from its useless or even deleterious envelope ; then it shines forth a glittering ingot, all-sufficient for its own glory."

He said further :

"The Chamber must be in mental touch with the Street ; the Deputies should represent all classes, else the power of the State can never be on a solid basis. A popular government alone has a chance to last in France. What is built up without the People is overthrown by the People."

As the sun was getting low, I asked the Prince's permission to take my leave. With much graciousness and kindness, he begged me to allow myself to be numbered among his friends. He conducted us, Widomski

and myself—to the gates of the park, whence we took our downward road to Constance, cheered by the beauty of the night and the remembrance of the agreeable hours we had spent.

“We shall see one another again, shall we not?” Louis Napoléon said as he clasped my hand.

Yes, indeed, I mean to see him again—to love him, to follow him !

## CHAPTER VI

### DAYS OF EXILE IN SWITZERLAND ; MOËSA

Prince Louis Napoléon writes his first book : *Considérations politiques et militaires sur la Suisse*—He falls in love—"La belle Thurgovienne"—The Baron d'Ambès discovers Moësa's secret—A useful ally—Thun—Arenaberg in January—Winter diversions—Life at the Château—The Prince writes another book : *Manuel d'artillerie pour la Suisse*—Interview with Armand Carrel—Another projected marriage : Louis and the Princesse Mathilde—Execution of Fieschi—Arenaberg in mourning for the death of Madame Mère (mother of Napoleon I.)—A presentiment (1836).

. . . 1833.—The Prince has done two noteworthy exploits in these latter days. He has written a very curious book, *Considérations politiques et militaires sur la Suisse*, and he has won the heart of a charming girl of twenty, a maid of the Thurgau, by name Moësa. I refrain from recording my impressions of the brochure, but I will confide to my diary the little secret I am perhaps the only one to know, having played a part in the adventure. . . . Oh ! no indiscretions, do not be afraid. My papers are in a safe place when I am at home !

Moësa ! Surname ? Christian name ? I cannot say. I know a river called Moësa, which drains a little lake on the flank of the Bernardino Pass, fills with its song the valley of Misox, lying amid gloomy glaciers and rugged peaks, and loses itself in the Ticino beyond San Vittore. I followed the course of the Moësa when I went that year to Bellinzona. And I followed Moësa, the other Moësa, the girl who bears the pretty name of the mountain-stream, one day this summer, when I was on my way back from Frauenfeld.



I followed her, the charming Swiss lass, involuntarily, drawn by her neat waist, her magnificent tresses, her bright face with the merry smile she once or twice turned round to cast behind her. I followed her a long way. . . . The truth is, there was no other way for me to take to get home after my long expedition. . . . She went up as if for Arenaberg. This surprised me at first; then I told myself that, after all, there was nothing extraordinary in the fact.

Well, I was wrong; there was good reason for astonishment. After a while, having let myself drop some way to the rear, I noticed she had stopped and was chatting with some one. This some one I very soon saw was no other than Prince Louis Napoléon!

I deemed it best and most judicious to keep my presence secret, for many different reasons. I drew nearer without their seeing me, and I could tell that some degree of intimacy united them, though I could not overhear what they said. But acts followed words. Like any other pair of lovers, they exchanged a hurried kiss and immediately parted, the pretty girl returning the way she had come, the young man disappearing behind the trees.

After all, Louis Napoléon is a young man of twenty-five! . . .

Highly amused, I left my hiding-place and deliberately accosted the pretty child as she passed me. This alarmed her just at first.

"Well, well!" I began with a laugh, "here's night falling, Mademoiselle. Aren't you afraid of the wolves?"

But the girl, speaking French with a strong intermixture of bad German, cried—I translate, however, what she said:

"Will you leave me alone? For three hours you've been following me. . . . I don't like such behaviour."

"Come, never be vexed at a joke! Really and truly, I was following my own road, and I should never have spoken to you but for the charming little episode I have just witnessed. . . . But have no fear, I am one of Prince Louis Napoléon's friends."

This announcement not only reassured her and stopped on her lips the probably disagreeable things she was going to say, but led to a conversation ; without a doubt she hoped to extract some information from me.

"Really, you know him?" she said, in a tone that had suddenly grown soft. . . . "In that case I have no reason to be afraid of you, for a young man so highly accomplished as the Prince can have none but honourable friends. . . . But, that being so, I beseech you not to say one word to any living soul of what you have seen."

"The most elementary courtesy, to say nothing of my friendship, would enjoin on me the most absolute reticence, Mademoiselle. You may rely on me. More than that, if I can find an opportunity to do you a service . . . for I am devoted to the Prince as one might be to a king. . . ."

"The greatest service you can render me is to keep silence about all this. . . ."

"Well, I promise you that, upon my honour! . . . Consider how luck favours you. Any one else might blab. . . . But, tell me this, why do you run this risk of some inquisitive busybody surprising your secret? Don't you know all eyes are on the Prince?"

". . . I never expected he would go so far as to kiss me."

"Come now, I didn't see you make any great effort to stop him."

"I would not displease him ; at the same time, I wish him to be more circumspect, and I will tell him so."

"Forgive him. He has a warm heart. He puts passion into everything he does."

"Oh ! I know that. . . . I do indeed !"

The avowal made me smile. What were their relations ? . . . I laughed and asked her :

"Tell me true, has he given you proofs of his passion by . . . ?"

"No, no, no," she protested. "But he has made me the tenderest speeches. And he has given me . . ."

She did not complete the sentence. What had he

given her—kisses or presents? Both perhaps. I had not the bad taste to press her further, contenting myself with merely adding :

“Well, enough! . . . Look you, I repeat my offer. . . . Rely on my assistance. Here is my address.”

“I am called Moësa, and I live an hour from here at the inn of ——.”

She named an inn which I knew quite well, having called there on several occasions for refreshments, but without ever having seen her.

We parted excellent friends. I could really be of some use to the Prince in this pretty rustic idyll of his, carrying love-letters between him and his fair one. He did not take it amiss to find me in the secret, but he too begged me to keep the affair to myself.

Thanks to my efforts, Moësa was able to come and visit the Prince in the little garden-house reserved for his use at the château on special days when the Queen was away from Arenaberg. Thus Louis Napoléon's exile was brightened by a gleam of sunshine—the sunshine of love, the sweetest and most genial of all illuminations.

\* \* \*

. . . 1834.—A marriage is spoken of between the Prince and the daughter of Dom Pedro of Portugal. A *canard* at once mischievous and absurd. The Prince said of it with a laugh :

“A mere newspaper invention! I have no predilection for Doña Maria personally; as for the throne of Portugal, no doubt it would be an honour to ascend it . . . but I prefer to wait and climb the steps of that of France, the only one I aspire to. . . .”

Moreover, he had the following inserted in the newspapers, following on a denial of the authenticity of the news :

“Convinced as I am that the great name I bear will not always remain an object of scorn in the eyes of my fellow-countrymen, seeing it recalls the memory of fifteen years of glory, I shall wait with patience in a foreign and friendly land till the French People summons back into



their midst those who have been driven into exile by twelve hundred thousand foreigners."

Anyway, we now see him back at Thun to carry out his military duties.

A smart saying of his occurs to my memory, also in connection with this marriage with the Queen of Portugal. Some one had remarked to him :

"Well, if you accept, perhaps it is an easy road to go by the Tagus to reach the Seine."

"No, no, it is too far round," was the answer. "I prefer the direct line."

\* \* \*

*Written the same year.*—I have just made a little journey to Thun to see the Prince, and the place.

Thun is a very picturesque town, possessing the charm arising from its proximity to a lake, the originality of its mediæval architecture, and the imposing air given it by a strong and ancient feudal castle. The Aar, which prolongs the lake in a broad channel up to the town, enlivens Thun with the flash of green waters and the rustle of reeds, a debt repaid to the river by a hundred reflections of verdant trees and white houses. High above all these pretty objects, the rude fortalice of the Zähringen lifts its ancient tower, springing from a huddle of lower buildings and affording from its summit a glorious view over the snow-clad Oberland. In the town the principal street, with its massive arcades, presents on certain days a scene of noisy and many-coloured activity that is highly curious. There are two ranges of shops, one underneath on the street-level, the other forming a sort of terrace—the effect being an appearance of busy, crowded activity I have seen nowhere else. . . .

It is in this street Louis Napoléon lives. He has just been gazetted a Captain, and cannot contain himself for delight.

"I am getting promotion," he told me with a smile. "How high shall I rise, I wonder."

"To an Emperor's epaulettes," I answered.

He is in the midst of friends here. The other day

we were walking along the Zurich road, in company with another officer. A wagon passed filled with laughing and singing Bernese marksmen. They recognized him and raised a shout of "Vive Napoléon!" I was deeply touched by this token of good-will accorded the exile. *He* would not let us see how gratified he was; but he muttered "Fine fellows! good fellows!" shaking his head.

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It can hardly be said that any Bonapartist party actually exists, but there are warm friends round Louis Napoléon, there is no doubt of that. What will these aspirations, combined with the glorious memories the victor of Jena has left in the French people's heart—what will they lead to? We cannot tell; but of a surety something will come of it. Day by day the Monarchy is losing its prestige. Liberal ideas are gaining ground. They can only crystallize round the name of Louis Napoléon. In his inmost heart, does he dream of the Imperial throne? or does he aspire merely to be the head of a Republican government? Circumstances, no doubt, will determine his ultimate choice.

\* \* \*

*January 10th, 1835.*—After a stay in Italy, I am back again on the shores of the Lake of Constance. What a different, and what a wonderful, spectacle is Switzerland in winter!

One evening at Arenaberg we played a game of billiards that seemed as if it would never end. I beat the Prince, which vexed me, but amused him highly. However, he had his revenge the next game. Afterwards he said to me:

"You see, in life, each man knows victory in his turn. . . . We are playing a game for high stakes, the Bourbons and I. . . . For a moment they have a good lead. . . . But *I* am making points, too, and little by little catching them up."

Prettily put, and, as a matter of fact, the number of his adherents does increase.

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*Summer, 1835.*—The Prince is turned engineer! Cottrau and I are his assistants. We are building a road! Yes, a road, so as to approach the château by an easy gradient. We amuse ourselves with digging and embanking, like children in a garden playing with heaps of sand. Between whiles we talk politics, travel, fishing. . . . The Prince has been to Geneva with the Queen, his mother. He has brought back a favourable impression of the place, although the town struck him as wanting in picturesqueness, cold and harsh with Protestantism. . . .

“Certainly it looks serious, orderly and prosperous, but so sad! The shade of Calvin seems to haunt it. Truly, theology apart, Catholicism is best for us Frenchmen, who love colour, eloquence, and music. A Catholic ceremonial is a feast of delight, with its sacerdotal vestments, its rich ornaments, its holy vessels all sparkling with jewels, its full-choired anthems rising from the organ-galleries. It is alive, full of enthusiasm and refreshment, and, over and above this, possesses, for mystic souls, for dreamers, of which I am one, a fine flavour of devotion, of mental exaltation. At bottom, the French are Catholics. That is why the Government should side with the Church, always on condition it does not trespass on the temporal domain. . . . For, to be on the side of the Church is to be on the side of the majority; it is to be in accord with the popular voice, which in my eyes is the last word of politics.”

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. . . 1835.—It is extraordinary, the number of letters, books, albums, presents, drawings, poems received at Arenaberg! The Queen was popular in former days, there is no denying it; she is still regarded with great affection. Her weaknesses are forgotten; after all, they came in the main from an excess of sensibility. People



spoil her, and will go on spoiling her, to the end of her days, like a pretty child. She exhibits, with an obliging grace that is instinct with pride, all these objects, souvenirs, and knick-knacks. Her collection of Imperial relics is immense. And her collection of music—well!

There are many visitors. The salver shows the cards of people of every world—including the New World. Not a traveller of note comes into the neighbourhood without begging the honour of being received. Cottrau is the laughing representative of the lighter side of Arenaberg, while I, I am the grave-faced young man who endeavours to extract from these birds of passage something of political utility to the Prince. . . .

When there are a number of intimate friends gathered at the château, a play is acted. When there are young people, dancing is the word. When serious folk are in the majority, high problems are attacked. . . . In this connection Queen Hortense diverted us greatly one day at dinner by enumerating the rules of society conversation which she had learned of Mme Campan. That worthy lady held that an intimate connection should prevail between the subject of conversation and the number of guests. Was it a dozen, then literary topics should be discussed, voyages and tales of adventure, or the sayings of famous persons quoted, so that a sufficiently large audience might encourage the narrators. Was the number only eight or nine? Then scientific and artistic judgments might be ventilated, new discoveries noted, and so on. . . . Six—then politics and philosophy were admissible subjects. With four pair of ears, secrets of the heart might legitimately be exchanged, sentiment indulged in, personal ambitions discussed. Lastly, when the company is reduced to two, each can talk about himself and all goes smoothly, for egoism is not out of place in a *tête-à-tête*. Whereon the Queen observed laughingly :

“What diplomacy! I have tried to put the system in practice. But these instructions, excellent as they are, have once or twice played me a nasty trick. It happened on one occasion that, counting on six at table, I got up a most superior philosophical argument. . . . But lo!

two unexpected guests arrived, and I had there and then to spur the conversation on to the subjects appropriate for eight—arts and sciences to wit! Mme Campan's method has so often brought me into difficulties that I have been forced to give it up at last!"

Cottrau caps the story with a witty remark—and we all see that the best of all rules is just to follow the impulse of the moment and be guided by the chance cross-currents of impromptu and repartee.

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. . . 1835.—Another work by the Prince: *Manuel d'artillerie pour la Suisse*. He is a regular student. What king ever before published books in his youth like an ordinary author!

"This book is going to be of great use to me," he confided to me. "I mean to send it to a host of officers. It will serve as my introduction when I come to broaching the subject I shall one day have to speak of with them."

Being sent by the Prince to interview Carrel, I saw that famous man yesterday, and, giving him a copy of the *Manuel d'artillerie*, as my way is, *to break the ice*, I did my best judiciously to sound the views of the renowned Republican. This is, as near as may be, the conversation that ensued between us:

"You are aware, sir, in what high esteem Prince Louis Napoléon holds you, and likewise what an interest he takes in all questions affecting France—his country, which condemns him to exile. That is the reason why he has asked me to hand you this book, to hear your opinion, which he is most anxious to have, as well as your general views on the policy you represent."

"I do not think the hour has yet struck for us," replied Armand Carrel, after some words of high praise for the Prince; "in the first place, because the youth of the Republican party has acted unwisely in extolling the terrible epoch which gave birth to our ideas—a time marked at once by noble heroism and monstrous crimes, the political morality of which is beyond the popular comprehension; in the second place, we have no leader."



"Are you not leader," I asked him in reply, "by virtue of your work and your talents?"

"I was thought of in that capacity, I am aware, after the death of General La Fayette; but I quite realize a man of higher prestige than mine is called for."

Then, and then only, I brought forward the name of Louis Napoléon.

"Not a doubt of it," he answered; "the name he bears is the greatest of modern times, the only one that rallies the most widespread sympathies. Let him understand the new interests of France, let him remember the fundamental principle of the sovereignty of the people, and he may well have a great part to play in the future."

I did not insist further, but turned the conversation to other subjects, only too well pleased to have received so clear a pronouncement as to the Prince's prospects from one who, for all his modest disclaimer, is certainly the leader of the Republican party.<sup>1</sup>

And I was overjoyed to think that similar sentiments are every day heard from the lips of important personages, the most widely separated in feeling and opinion.

*December 1835.*—New matrimonial projects. Queen Hortense has cast her eyes upon the Princesse Mathilde, the daughter of Jérôme Bonaparte. She is young and pretty and agreeable. They say she is enamoured of art and literature—another claim to favour in the eyes of Louis's mother, who wields the brush so well herself and has no hesitation in putting up her pictures to lottery! Mathilde and Louis have met at Lausanne and seen much of each other at Rome. . . . The negotiations drag on interminably.

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*February 15th, 1836.*—After seventeen sittings, the Court of Peers, presided over by Baron Pasquier, has pronounced its decision on the outrage of July 28th. Joseph Fieschi is condemned to the penalties of parricide; he will be led to the scaffold, exposed in his shirt, bare-

<sup>1</sup> Armand Carrel died in the following year, being killed in a duel by Émile de Girardin (July 22nd, 1836).



foot, and his head covered by a black veil, will have his sentence read out by the usher to the assembled people, and then be executed. His accomplices, Morey, Pépin, and Boireau, are condemned, the first two to death, the last to twenty years' imprisonment.

It is very dismal here. . . . I am going into Italy for a few weeks. Arenaberg is in mourning ever since the death of Madame la Mère (the mother of Napoleon I.). A laugh is scarcely ever heard. The winter is bitterly cold, the sky often overcast. There is skating, no doubt, and sleighing ; but still, it grows tiresome. I am off. . . . But why should the Prince have told me confidentially :

“ My dear d'Ambès, don't stay away too long. To you, and you alone, I will say this much,—great things are in preparation. I am full of presentiments. Either I shall die soon in exile, eaten up, devoured by my fever to be up and doing ; or I shall get to work—and amaze Europe. . . . ”

## CHAPTER VII

### “ L’AFFAIRE DE STRASBOURG ”

*October 30th, 1836*

The Baron d’Ambès’ accounts the outcome of personal knowledge—Preliminaries—Partisans of the Prince—Names of participators in the attempt of October 30th—Departure from Arenaberg—Night of the 29th : the dream—Daybreak and morning of the 30th : the reality—The Baron returns to Arenaberg after the disaster—Another account in a letter of the Prince’s to his mother—Detailed particulars—At the Quartier Austerlitz and the Finkmatt barracks—Confusion and final failure—The Prince made prisoner—Queen Hortense at the feet of Louis Philippe—The Prince conducted to Paris, and thence to Lorient, where he embarks for America.

*November 1836.*—I am now writing what is matter of history, not a mere chronicle of minor and personal matters. The Strassburg attempt has failed. The thing is no longer a secret, therefore, and I can narrate it at length. I was sufficiently mixed up with it to be able to speak with knowledge—moreover, with something of sweat on the brow and a touch of pride in the heart.

For some months (my stay in Italy was of short duration) I had been at work to foster among the Prince’s sympathizers a feeling favourable to the projects he had confided to me, as well as to Colonel Parquin and some others, but which he was hiding, so he said, from his mother. Was he really doing so? I am not sure, the Queen being so intimately connected with all the ambitious dreams her son cherishes !

Arenaberg, and subsequently Baden, whither the Prince went several times to drink the waters, were turned by these efforts of ours into regular centres of conspiracy,

for we must call things by their name. It was a genuine military plot, which the exile looked coolly in the face.

Vaudrey, Parquin, Persigny—these were the three men who made the Strassburg conspiracy possible. And Taillandier was the man who caused its failure—unless indeed Darvignac betrayed us.

Our last meeting took place on October 23rd. On the 25th the Prince alleged a shooting-party in the Principality of Hechingen as an excuse to his mother for leaving Arenaberg. All he admitted to her was that he meant to take the same opportunity to attend a political rendezvous. I was present at the conversation. The Queen, I feel certain, was aware of her son's real purpose, and she slipped on his finger a ring which Napoleon had given her on the day of his departure for St. Helena—a ring which she looked upon more or less as a talisman.

The Prince went by carriage, making his way *via* Lahr, Freiburg, and Colmar to Strassburg, which I reached by the direct road, arriving before him in order to secure him a lodging in the Rue de la Fontaine.

On the 29th I proceeded to the Prince's and took him to see Colonel Vaudrey. It was a glorious night. We had to traverse the whole extent of the town. The Prince expressed his hopes of overthrowing the Government without the effusion of a drop of blood, since all that was really necessary was to convince the Army. On my side, I undertook to foment a popular rising the echoes of which should stir the soldiery. To this end I had already hired a number of Strassburgers to shout "Vive l'Empereur!" All would not be sincere, and their venal cries would be of no value save for the atmosphere of enthusiasm so created; but then, what an innocent bit of trickery to win success!

At last we reached the Rue des Orphelins. It was eleven o'clock. All were there: Persigny, Parquin, Laity, Quérelles, Gricourt, Bruc, quivering with excitement and ambition. . . . When he had thanked each severally, an eagle was produced, which we greeted, with what enthusiasm! Our plan was laid before Vaudrey,





MALMAISON, FROM THE SEINE.



who approved it with slight modifications, but repeated his previous doubts. In this emergency the Prince perhaps committed a blunder in handing the Colonel a paper guaranteeing him ten thousand francs a year for each of his children. “I give my blood, I do not sell it,” cried Vaudrey, adding : “happen what may, I am with you.” I was the only one there not in uniform, for I had a mission different from that of the other conspirators. They were to bring over the Army, *I* was to persuade the People.

Accordingly I left my companions and departed, arranging to meet again at six o’clock in the Quartier d’Austerlitz.

What a night of silver moonlight and golden stars ! I could not help my attention wandering from my duty of the moment to gaze aloft at those eternal stars looking down upon the earth with eyes of fire. I felt how small a thing is a Revolution in the story of the heavens, and even in the life of humanity, yet I told myself we were attempting a mighty enterprise ! If we succeeded, it meant so much—without a drop of blood spilt, the Monarchy crushed, a new system of government set up, as the Prince and the Queen, his mother, had so often expounded to me, based on a new tradition born of the Liberalism of ’89, in harmony with modern aspirations, in accord with the main body of French opinion, a system combining liberty and force, formidable to foreign nations, paternal towards its own citizens ; a system at once firm and popular, the system that was exactly adapted to the times !

However, I soon came back to every-day, and proceeded to visit the different localities where I was to meet groups of men who had made up their minds to declare for Louis Napoléon. At half-past five my round was completed, the money distributed, the necessary orders given. At a quarter after six I stood in front of the Austerlitz Barracks. The sky was overcast. It was beginning to snow.

Already Vaudrey was haranguing, with drawn sword, the 4th Artillery, his own regiment ! He had barely



finished before shouts of "Vive Napoléon !" rent the air. Instantly the Prince took up the word, and soon raised aloft Labédoyère's eagle, which all my men saluted with acclamations again and again repeated.

All was going excellently. Laity, with a wave of his arm, set the battalion of *pontonnières* in motion. The artillerymen, band in front, marched off. The Prince gave orders, to the first to seize the telegraph, to the others to go and get his proclamations printed, to others again (the gunners) to accompany Persigny to arrest the Préfet, to others to follow him to the house of General Voirol. I was to hurry with my contingent to the Finkmatt Barracks to repeat the scene just described and win over the 46th of the line. When I arrived there I found, alas ! that the men's minds had been influenced against the Prince and an abominable rumour circulated that the supposed Prince was an impostor and not the nephew of the great Napoleon at all ! Result, sudden hesitation ! I did my best to recall the fellows to a better state of mind.

I climbed on the wall of the barracks, together with a number of young men, to whom I promised on the spot handsome rewards. Their shouts redoubled at this. My word ! You would have thought all Strassburg was yelling "Vive l'Empereur !" In vain ; we were beaten. The officers, especially M. Taillandier, brought back their men to what they called their duty and made them fire on the people.<sup>1</sup> Many of my contingent threw stones at the soldiers. A struggle ensued, in which I lost sight of the Prince. When next I saw him, alas ! he was a prisoner. They were leading him off to the guard-room. A dreadful spasm of anguish gripped me. No doubt of it—they were going to shoot him !

Must we try a final effort ? The gates of the barracks had been shut ; there was no way of getting in. Moreover, in face of failure, a general disappearance of my auxiliaries had taken place, some terrified, some guying the whole affair. Under ten minutes I was left alone,

<sup>1</sup> This is denied ; Louis Blanc, in his *Histoire de Dix Ans*, says the orders were to fire in the air.

crestfallen, overwhelmed, the sweat streaming from my brow. Never had I felt so utterly broken.

In gloomy despair, not having even the melancholy satisfaction of being compromised in the affair or suffering any interference whatever from the authorities, I stayed only a short time in the town, then hurried away to inform Queen Hortense of what had occurred.

By the time I reached Arenaberg the Queen had already received a letter from her son, dated from the Citadel, and there was nothing left for me to do but to console her and suggest some hope in the clemency of Louis Philippe.

“There is only one course for me to take,” she told me, making up her mind with the rapidity that was characteristic of her. “I shall enter France under a fictitious name and go straight to the King.”

And this is precisely what she did.

\* \* \*

. . . 1837.—The Queen has graciously communicated to me a number of letters the Prince has written to her since his arrest. I have copied them with pious affection.

The first, here reproduced, is of genuine historical importance. It gives the complete narrative of the Strassburg incident. The Prince has not mentioned me in it—out of tact, no doubt, for fear it should bring me into trouble. He little knows me!

“DEAR MOTHER,—To give you a detailed account of my misfortunes is to renew your grief and mine; yet it is at the same time a consolation for us both to inform you fully of all the impressions I have experienced, of all the emotions that have shaken me since the end of October. You know what the pretext was I gave for my departure from Arenaberg, but you do not know what was at the moment passing in my mind. Strong in my conviction, which made me look upon the Napoleonist cause as the only national cause of France, as the only civilizing cause in Europe, proud of the nobility and purity of my intentions, I had quite resolved to raise



the Imperial eagle or to fall a victim to my political faith.

"I set off, following in my carriage the same road I had taken, three months ago, on my way to Unkirch and Baden ; everything was the same about me ; but what a difference in the impressions that filled my mind ! Then I was gay and serene as the day that shone around me ; now, sad and pensive, my spirits had taken on the complexion of the cold, foggy air that enfolded me ! I shall be asked what there was to compel me to abandon a happy existence to run all the risks of a hazardous enterprise. My answer is, a secret voice summoned me on, and that nothing in the world would have induced me to put off to a later date an attempt that appeared to me to offer so many chances of success.

"What care I for the clamour of the vulgar herd which will call me a fool because I have not succeeded, and would have exaggerated my deserts if I had triumphed ! I assume the whole responsibility of the event, for I have acted out of conviction and out of no impulse from without. Alas ! if I were the only victim I should have nothing to deplore ; I have found in my friends boundless devotion, and I have no reproach to utter against any one whatsoever.

"On the 27th I arrived at Lahr, a small town in the Grand Duchy of Baden, where I waited for news ; near this place, the axle-tree of my *calèche* having broken, this forced me to stop a day in the town. On the morning of the 28th I set out from Lahr ; I turned back on my old road, passed through Freiburg, Neu-Brisach and Colmar, and arrived that evening at eleven o'clock at Strassburg without the smallest hindrance.

"My carriage drove to the Hôtel de la Fleur, while I went to take up my quarters in a little room that had been engaged for me in the Rue de la Fontaine.

"There, on the 29th, I saw Colonel Vaudrey and gave him the plan of operations which I had determined on ; but the Colonel, whose noble and generous sentiments deserved a better fate, said to me : 'There is no question here of an armed plot ; your cause is too French and too



pure to sully it by shedding French blood ; there is but one way of acting worthy of you, because it will avoid all collision. Once you are at the head of my regiment we will march together to General Voirol’s ; an old soldier will not resist the sight of you and of the Imperial eagle when he learns the garrison is with you.’ I approved his reasoning, and everything was settled for the next morning. A house had been secured in a street near the Quartier d’Austerlitz, to which we were to retire to go forward from thence to the barracks of the same name directly the infantry regiment was mustered.

“On the 29th, at eleven at night, one of my friends came for me in the Rue de la Fontaine to guide me to the general rendezvous, and together we crossed the whole breadth of the town. Bright moonlight illuminated the streets. I took this fine weather as a favourable omen for the morrow ; I noted carefully the localities by which we passed, and the silence that brooded over them impressed me. How calm it was ! how different it may well be to-morrow !

“Arrived at the house, in the Rue des Orphelins, I found my friends gathered in two rooms on the ground-floor. I thanked them for the devotion they were displaying in my cause, and promised them that henceforth we would share good no less than evil fortune. One of the officers brought an eagle : it was the one that had belonged to the 7th Regiment of the line. . . . ‘The eagle of Labédoyère !’ all shouted, and we pressed it to our hearts with the liveliest emotion. . . . All the officers were in full uniform ; I had put on an artillery uniform, and wore a staff-cap on my head. The night seemed very long ; I spent it in writing my proclamation, which I had not wished to have printed for fear of indiscretion. It was agreed that I should stay in the house where we were till the Colonel sent me word to go to the barracks. We counted the hours, the minutes, the seconds ; the hands pointed to six in the morning. How hard it is to express what one feels in such circumstances ; in a second one lives more than half a score years ; for to live, is it not to use our organs, our senses, our faculties,

all parts of ourselves which give us the feeling of being alive, and in these critical moments our faculties, our organs, our senses, roused to the highest pitch of exaltation, are concentrated, centred in a single point. It is the hour destined to decide all *our fate*. A man is strong when he can tell himself : To-morrow I shall be the liberator of my country, or I shall be dead ; he is sorely to be pitied when circumstances have been such that he has not had the power to be either one or the other.

"In spite of our precautions, the noise a considerable gathering of people was bound to make awoke the tenants of the first floor ; we heard them get up and open the windows. It was five o'clock ; we redoubled our carefulness, and they went to sleep again.

"At last six o'clock struck ! Never did the striking of a clock rouse so violent a commotion within me ; but a moment more, and the *réveillée* from the Austerlitz Barracks set my heart beating more wildly still. The great moment was at hand. Next instant no small commotion reached our ears from the street : soldiers tramped by shouting, horsemen dashed full gallop past our windows. I sent an officer to find out the reason : was it the Headquarter Staff that was already aware of our plans ? had we been discovered ? He came back directly to tell me the noise came from a number of troopers the Colonel was sending to fetch their horses, which were stabled outside barracks.

"A few minutes more elapsed, and then they came to tell me the Colonel was waiting for me. Full of high hope, I hurried into the street. M. Parquin, wearing the uniform of a General of Brigade, and a Brigade-Major, carrying the eagle in his hand, are by my side. Two officers bring up the rear.

"The intervening space was short, and was soon crossed. The regiment was drawn up in parade order in the barrack-square (of the Austerlitz Barracks) inside the gates ; on the grass were stationed forty mounted artillerymen.

"You may picture the happiness I felt at that



moment. After twenty years of exile, I was at last treading the sacred soil of the fatherland, I was among Frenchmen whom the memory of the Emperor was once more to electrify.

“ Colonel Vaudrey stood by himself in the middle of the great square, and I walked up to him ; in a moment the Colonel—whose fine face and figure looked singularly noble and impressive—drew his sword and cried :

“ ‘ Soldiers of the 4th regiment of artillery ! A great revolution is accomplishing at this moment. You see before you the nephew of the Emperor Napoleon I. He is come to champion the rights of the people ; the people and the army can count on him. Round him should rally all who love the glory and liberty of France. Soldiers ! you will feel, as your commander does, all the grandeur of the enterprise you are about to undertake, all the sacredness of the cause you are about to defend. Soldiers ! can the nephew of the Emperor Napoleon count on you ? ’ . . . His voice was drowned in an instant by unanimous shouts of ‘ Vive Napoléon ! Vive l’Empereur ! ’ Thereupon I took up the word as follows : ‘ Resolved to conquer or die for the cause of the French people, it is to you first of all I have chosen to present myself, because between you and me are noble and stirring memories. It was in your regiment the Emperor Napoleon, my uncle, served as Captain ; it was with you he distinguished himself at the siege of Toulon ; it was your gallant regiment, again, that opened the gates of Grenoble to him on his return from the Isle of Elba. Soldiers ! new destinies are reserved for you. To you the glory of beginning a mighty enterprise, to you the honour of saluting, the first, the eagle of Austerlitz and Wagram ! ’ Then I grasped the eagle which one of my officers—M. de Querelles—bore, and, showing it them, ‘ Soldiers ! ’ I went on, ‘ behold the symbol of the glory of France, destined likewise to become the symbol of liberty. For fifteen years it has led our fathers to victory ; it has shone on every battle-field, it has been borne through every capital of Europe. Soldiers ! will you not rally to this noble standard which I confide to your honour and



to your bravery? Will you not march with me against the traitors and oppressors of the fatherland to the cry of 'Long live France! Long live Liberty!?' A thousand cries of approval answered my address. Then we set forward on the march, band in front, while joy and hope gleamed bright on every countenance. The plan was to hasten to the General's, not to clap a pistol to his head, but to hold it before his eyes, to make him join us. To reach his quarters we had to traverse the whole length of the town. On the way I had to detach an officer with a squad of men to the printer's, to get my proclamation published; another to the Préfet's, to arrest him; while six others were sent on special errands. The result was that, by the time we reached the General's, I had voluntarily stripped myself of a part of my forces. But did I need to surround myself with armed men? Was I not counting on the participation of the people? And, as a matter of fact, let them say what they please, all along the route I followed I received the most unequivocal tokens of sympathy on the part of the population; my only difficulty was to defend myself against the vehemence of the marks of interest that were lavished on me, while the multiplicity of the cries that greeted me proved there was no party which did not sympathize with my aspirations!

"Arrived in the courtyard of the General's house, I climb the stairs, followed by MM. Vaudrey, Parquin and two officers. The General was not yet dressed. I say to him: 'General, I come to you as a friend; I should be grieved to raise our old flag, the tricolour, without a gallant soldier like yourself; the garrison is on my side, make up your mind to follow me.' He was shown the eagle, but he pushed it away and said: 'Prince, they have deceived you; the army knows its duty, and I shall very soon convince you it is so.' Thereupon I withdrew, issuing orders to leave an artillery picket to keep guard over him. Later on the General appeared before his men and urged them to return under discipline; the artillerymen, under M. Parquin's orders, refused to recognize his authority and only answered him with re-

peated shouts of : ‘Vive l’Empereur !’ . . . Subsequently the General managed to escape from his house by a back door.

“When I came out from the General’s I was greeted by the same acclamations and the same cries of : ‘Vive l’Empereur !’ . . . But already this first check had greatly discouraged me. I had not been prepared for it, convinced as I was that it only needed the sight of the eagle to awake in the General’s heart memories of old-time glory and induce him to join us.

“We resumed our march. We turned out of the main street and made our way into the Finkmatt Barracks by the narrow lane leading to it from the Faubourg de Pierre. It is a large building constructed in a sort of blind alley ; the space in front is too confined to allow a regiment to be drawn up in review order. Seeing myself thus shut in between the ramparts and the barrack buildings, I perceived that the plan agreed upon had not been followed. On our arrival the soldiers pressed round us and I made them a speech. Most of them went off for their arms and returned to join us, testifying their sympathy by their acclamations. However, noticing a certain hesitation momentarily growing among them, the result of reports circulated by some of the officers, who did all they could to inspire doubt in their minds as to my identity, and realizing, moreover, that we were wasting precious time in an unfavourable position instead of hurrying at once to the other regiments that were waiting for us, I gave the word to the Colonel to set out. He begged me to stay a little longer, and I yielded to his representations ; a few minutes more, and it was too late. Infantry officers came up, had the gates shut, and reprimanded their men sternly ; the latter began to hesitate again, I made to have the officers arrested, their men rescue them. Then confusion reigned supreme ; so confined was the space that each of us was lost in the press. The populace that had mounted on the wall, began to throw stones at the infantry, the gunners indeed to use their pieces ; but we stopped that, for we saw in a moment we should have killed numbers of



people. I saw the Colonel first arrested by the infantry, then released by the artillerymen. For myself, I was being borne down by a crowd of men who, recognizing me, levelled their bayonets at me ; I parried their thrusts with my sword, trying to appease them the while, till the gunners came up and dragged me under shelter of their muskets and set me in their midst. Then I rushed forward, with three or four non-commissioned officers, towards the mounted artillerymen to get hold of a horse, all the infantry-men at my heels. I found myself jammed in between the horses and the wall, so that I could not stir. Then up came the fellows from all sides, seized hold of me, and led me off to the guard-room. On entering, I found M. Parquin there ; I held out my hand to him. Accosting me with an air of calm and quiet resignation, he said : ‘ Prince, we shall be shot, but we shall die in a good cause.’ ‘ Yes,’ I answered him, ‘ we have failed in a noble and a glorious enterprise.’

“ Soon afterwards arrived General Voirol. Carriages were procured which conveyed us to the new prison. Behold me, then, between four walls, with barred windows, in the abode of felons ! Those alone who know what it is to pass in an instant from the height of happiness the noblest illusions afford to the depth of misery no hope relieves, and to cross this immeasurable interval without having a moment to prepare oneself, only they can understand what was passing in my heart.

“ At the gaol, during the formalities of our admission, we all met again. M. de Querelles, seizing my hand and pressing it, said out loud : ‘ Prince, spite of our defeat, I am still proud of what I have done.’ I was subjected to an examination ; I was calm and resigned ; my mind was made up. I was asked the following questions : ‘ What induced you to act as you have done ? ’ ‘ My political opinions,’ I replied, ‘ and my desire once again to see my country, of which the invasion of foreigners had robbed me. In 1830 I asked to be treated as a simple citizen. I was dealt with as a pretender to the throne ; very well, I have behaved as a pretender ! ’



‘You wished to establish a military government?’ ‘I wished to establish a government based on election by the people.’ ‘What would you have done, if you had won?’ ‘I should have called together a National Congress.’

“I next declared that I, and I only, having organized the whole scheme, I only having induced the others to join in it, I was bound, and I only, to take upon me the whole responsibility. I was led back to my cell, where I threw myself on a bed they had prepared for me, and, despite my agonies of mind, sleep, which soothes with a gentle respite the suffering spirit, came to calm my nerves. Misfortune is no bar to repose; it is only remorse will have none of it. But how terrible the moment of waking! I thought I had had a horrid nightmare. It was the fate of the persons compromised that gave me the most pain and anxiety.

. . . . .

“On the evening of November 9th I was informed that I was to be transferred to another prison; I left my cell to find the General and the Préfet waiting for me. They removed me in their carriage without telling me where they were taking me. I begged that I might be left with my companions in misfortune; but the Government had decided otherwise. Arriving at the Hôtel de la Préfecture I found two post-chaises standing ready; I was put into one along with M. Cuynat, Commandant of the Gendarmerie of the Seine, and Lieutenant Thiboulot; in the other rode four non-commissioned officers.

“The two officers who went with me as guards were old officers of the Empire, intimate friends of M. Parquin’s. Naturally, therefore, they showed me every possible consideration; I might have thought myself travelling with friends. On the 11th, at two o’clock in the morning, I arrived at the Hôtel de la Préfecture in Paris. M. Delessert was very obliging; he informed me that you had come to France to beseech the King’s clemency on my behalf, that I was to set off again in two hours for

Lorient, from whence I was to cross to the United States on board a French frigate.

"At four I took the road again under the same escort ; and on the 14th we arrived at the Citadel of Port-Louis, near Lorient. I remained there till November 4th, the day on which the frigate put to sea."

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. . . 1837.—In connection with the Strassburg incident we must not forget either the name of Madame Gordon<sup>1</sup> or the part she played in it. She is a professional singer, brought up in the Napoleonist faith, daughter of a Captain of the Imperial Guard, widow (but how young !) of an Englishman who had died of typhus three years ago. She is agreeable, but in a masculine way, a warrior and a wit. Vaudrey is a great admirer of hers—if not a lover—and the Prince too. I quite think she has taken Moësa's place in the latter's affections.

\* \* \*

. . . 1837.—Not only did Voirol abstain from joining us, but I know now that he spoke of our designs to the Préfet of Strassburg, M. Choppin d'Arnouville.

So, too, Captain Raindre, who had rejected our overtures, gave information to M. de Franqueville, his commanding officer, who communicated with General Voirol.

<sup>1</sup> Eléonore Brault, born in 1808 at Paris, a pupil at the Conservatoires of Paris and Milan, made her début in 1831 in Paris, where Rossini gave her gratuitous instruction. Her father had brought her up in the Napoleonist cult. It was in London, where she won no little success, that she married Sir Gordon Archer, who was Commissary to the Franco-Spanish legion. The same year she was stabbed full in the face by an unknown assailant in St. James's Park, and she lost her husband soon afterwards by typhus at Vittoria, in 1834, when she was in Italy, where she roused the utmost enthusiasm.

In 1836 she was twenty-eight, handsome, poor, and not a little unconventional. Her Bonapartism grew more fervent through intercourse with Persigny, and no doubt with the Baron d'Ambès, who probably introduced her to Louis Napoléon. . . . Vaudrey is also said by some to have been one of her lovers. On the morning of the Strassburg attempt, Mme Gordon passed Voirol in the streets. She said afterwards that, had she believed him to be against Louis Napoléon, she would have shot him.

Voirol, warned twice over, sent the Prince’s letter to the Minister, and it was Raindre who was its bearer.

Thus the Government knew beforehand of our proposed attempt. I am persuaded it let things go on in order to afford itself the satisfaction of easily crushing the *émeute* and the glory of a victory, of course inevitable. A plot foiled always benefits a monarch’s executive and gives it a factitious air of vigour.



## CHAPTER VIII

### NAPOLEON IN AMERICA ; DEATH OF QUEEN HORTENSE

The Queen's illness ; chief cause and symptoms—The Prince returns to see his dying mother—Gives the Baron d'Ambès an account of his stay in the United States—Impressions of the country ; friends and occupations in New York—Hortense's last hours, and death—Burial—Tokens of sympathy with the Prince—The Ex-King Jérôme the only exception—The reason why—Louis Napoléon's ideals in 1838—"My uncle was Cæsar ; I shall be Augustus."

*April 5th, 1837.*—For several weeks past Queen Hortense's health has been going from bad to worse. The doctors are hiding her real state from her and have merely informed her of the necessity for an operation this spring.

She has just written to her son.

It was her journey to France, undertaken to win the King's clemency for the unfortunate hero of Strassburg, that so overtaxed her strength. She was ill before starting. Then, to attain her ends, she had to keep the authorities in the dark about her enterprise, thus complicating it with endless difficulties and all those thousand petty vexations that are involved in mysterious comings and goings, secret expeditions and concealed activities. All this could not fail to be mischievous where the Queen's health was already shaken. Instead of going direct to Paris, she made a short stay with the Raguses, at Viry, to begin with. Then, once in the capital, how exhausting for her, those visits to the Queen, to Molé, to see the King ! . . .

She succeeded in her object. It may well turn out it was to cost her her life.

*April 15th, 1837.*—The doctors have given up all idea of operating, not because the Queen is better, but, alas! because she could not bear it now. Dr. Conneau told me this would be the case in so many words.

“Anxiety is sapping her strength,” he said, “and is doing her more harm than the complaint itself.”

There is no doubt she is greatly depressed. The Strassburg fiasco has caused her more than chagrin—despair, or something very like it. She thinks the party is finally ruined, and we can find no means, neither Mme Salvage, who is the most devoted of companions and nurses, nor I, to rekindle the flame of courage that would prolong her days.

Lately Dr. Conneau has called into consultation several of his colleagues from Zürich and Constance, with whom has been associated Professor Lisfranc, sent for expressly from Paris.

M. Lisfranc, after a serious examination of the patient, has, to put it so, pronounced sentence of death ; we one and all shuddered as at a catastrophe that affected each of us personally.

Hope there is none, save in God. . . .

\* \* \*

*August 5th, 1837.*—Yesterday I went to meet the Prince, back again at last. His first words were for his mother. He knows her case is hopeless. Unhappy as he is, he seemed happy to have come in time to see her once more. He loves her deeply, more than as a mother—as a comrade, a confidante, I might almost say an accomplice, in all his plans. And she fully returns this affection, this confidence. It cannot be denied the failure of last autumn has estranged from the Pretender a number of self-interested friends, and even relations. Truly humanity has no very brilliant moral qualities to boast of! How servile the felicitations if he had succeeded! Well, amidst all this shameful desertion, Louis Napoléon finds in his mother the best and highest consolation. Never a word from her lips to cause him chagrin. Then he was far away ; never a letter from her that contains any note

of discouragement. She has faith in his star, and she never wearies of telling him so.

When he had crossed the threshold of the château it was to find Arese, Conneau, Parquin, Gricourt, Querelles, the Vieillards, awaiting us. It was an hour of indescribable emotion, the hour of tearful outpourings that reunited the dying mother with the proscribed exile, more jealously watched than ever since his fruitless attempt.

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*August 1837.*—To-day the Prince told me about his voyage and his impressions of America.

After staying two days at the Citadel of Saint-Louis, the frigate *Andromède* was towed out at last and was able to put to sea on November 21st. She made for Rio de Janeiro in the first instance, and then for New York, making a detour of 3,000 miles in order that the Prince might have no chance of communicating with his friends before the conclusion of the trial.

The commander, Henri de Villeneuve, was very kind to the exile, and gave him a share of his wardrobe. The Prince thanked him with the words :

“You are obliging the man who will one day be Emperor of the French, unfortunate as he may appear at present. I shall not forget you.”

On December 28th they crossed the line, on January 15th entered the roadstead of Rio. Louis was not allowed to disembark. After a short stay the voyage was resumed almost immediately for the United States, where they arrived March 30th, 1837, at Norfolk.

On setting foot on the American continent the Pretender learned the result of the Strassburg trial. He proceeded straight to New York and dined the same evening of his arrival at General Watson Webb's, where he found General Scott, his two brothers-in-law, the Stewarts, and a number of senators and statesmen. Soon afterwards he met his three cousins, Achille and Lucien Murat, and Pierre, son of Lucien Bonaparte. Achille was employed in the Post Office service ; Lucien was married





CARICATURES OF BARON HAUSSMANN AND OF DR. CONNEAU.



to the Head of an Institution ; Pierre was satisfied to lead a merry, somewhat ill-regulated life.

Louis Napoléon also frequented the society of several French Bonapartists : the brothers Peugnier, Lieutenant Lecomte, M. Cognet ; but Americans formed the majority of his acquaintance : the celebrated Washington Irving, Chancellor Kent, the Livingston and Hamilton families, the poet Halleck, the Witts, the Williamses of Cincinnati, General Wilson, O. Seymour, Phelps, etc. . . . He cultivated a quiet, studious life, interesting himself in the ideas and habits of young America. He would have gladly stayed a year at least, had not his mother's illness recalled him to Europe. He left New York on board the *George Washington* on June 12th and reached London on July 10th.

There he was refused his passport to travel to Switzerland under the protection of Austria—a monstrous thing ! The Prince had to borrow a friend's, but what a cause of grievance against Esterhazy and against Sebastiani !<sup>1</sup> The Prince therefore took the passport of a certain Mr. Robinson, evaded the police, and left England on the sly. He landed at Rotterdam, ascended the Rhine as far as Mannheim, arrived on August 4th at Sigmaringen, and the same evening got here.

\* \* \*

*September 10th, 1837.*—The Duchesse de Saint-Leu (Queen Hortense) got worse from day to day. The sky, which had cleared for some days, is again heavy with dark clouds. The wind blows roughly. It is bitter cold. They are treating the Prince odiously. At the very bedside of a dying mother he is hunted, annoyed, threatened, spied on. His lightest gestures, his visits out of doors, his conversations outside the circle of his intimates—all are noted, and report after report despatched to the French Government. The Queen bears her sufferings with an angelic patience, without complaint or recrimination. She can no longer get down into the garden. A

<sup>1</sup> The Austrian and French Ambassadors respectively in London.



few grapes, a little water, such is all her nourishment. The Prince never leaves her.

\* \* \*

*October 6th.*—The dreadful end is come : she is dead.

On the 4th a message was sent me that she was passing away, and I hurried to the château. There we were, a small band of her intimates of every day. She summoned her son to her bedside in the night. I did not leave the house again. Sobs are to be heard wherever you go. On the morning of the 5th, about four o'clock, she sent for us all, as well as her personal servants, and bade us "Farewell."

I know nothing so frightful, so utterly sad, as this farewell we cannot help comparing with the commonplace good-byes repeated in every-day life. Ah ! that last farewell, that trysting-word in eternity !

I cried like a child. I could not tell whether I believed in anything, in heaven, in hell, in my religion. I felt this word of meeting again futile, this farewell illusory. There was only, gaping before me, the bottomless abyss in which we plunge, body and soul, *for ever* ! The Queen spoke to Dr. Conneau, recommended her son to his loving care, made him promise never to leave him, then said to us :

"Dear friends, pray for me. I have never done harm to any one, and I hope God will have mercy on me. Farewell, Louis !"

The Prince kissed her lovingly, vehemently, folding her in his arms like a wife or a mistress. Never before had I so well understood the adoring affection he bore her. The Queen shut her eyes, only to open them again almost imperceptibly at a last word of her son's. Then she fell asleep, exhausted, never to wake again.

It was a quarter past five.

This death of a woman who once wore a crown, daughter of an Empress, daughter-in-law of the greatest Emperor that perhaps ever lived, this death in exile among a scanty band of friends, in the arms of her banished son, has something terrible, infinitely mournful

about it, something that purifies and absolves at once the good, brave mistress of Arenaberg, to whom, in her fifty-four years of life, no fault but love can be set down for blame!

\* \* \*

*October 11th.*—The Queen was buried yesterday. An extraordinary crowd of people filled the little church of Ermatingen. They had come from all parts, in carriages, in boats, on horseback, on foot. The coffin was borne by hand to the village by eight men of Arenaberg. We followed with aching hearts the poor box that held the mortal remains of her who seemed to us to have remained a girl all her life—a pretty, agreeable girl. Comte Tascher de la Pagerie came from Munich expressly to attend the funeral. There was a deputation from the Federal Diet. Some Protestant Ministers expressed a wish to join the Catholic, and this reunion of prayers seems to me infinitely touching. Prince Louis was a pathetic sight. He could not tell if France was going to give permission to lay the dead woman, according to her wish, at Rueil in the vault where the Empress Joséphine rested!

\* \* \*

*December 1837.*—In spite of the feelings of ill-will the Prince's conduct has given rise to among his relations, everybody has written to him in affectionate terms on occasion of this loss which has hurt him so cruelly—everybody except his uncle Jérôme. The Prince is deeply grieved at the circumstance. Why should Prince Jérôme show himself so intractable, so inexorable? <sup>1</sup>

\* \* \*

1838.—Some while ago I found myself in company

<sup>1</sup> Why? M. George Duval, in a recently published look on the boyhood and youth of Napoleon III., has given an explanation that is at any rate plausible. This we give here; it will add a modern note to these memoranda of other days.

King Jérôme, says M. Duval, entertained more ardent hopes than any of the others of recovering the losses exile involved, and even to see his

with Prince Louis Napoléon, Amédée Thierry, and two or three familiars of the house of Mme S——.

Some one was speaking of the wish of the Government to see the Prince return to America.

"Yes," said Mme S——, "they wished it so strongly that they spread a report that he had gone. But," she added, turning to the Prince, "you have no notion of doing so, have you?"

"My duty calls me to France, Madam," was his answer.

This reply in no way surprised us. I know he has abandoned no jot of his plans. I know that, the Strassburg attempt having failed, he is pondering another, better managed. I know he is looking for means to plant batteries which this time shall sweep the party of kings, tyrants, exilers into annihilation. I know that Mme Gordon has come back and that *she* is working, as we all are, for the good cause. I know what is preparing, but I do not choose to confide the secret even to this paper.

But this much I may say: "Louis Napoléon's magnificently tenacious will is bound to win. It is implied in another phrase I noted, spoken at Amédée Thierry's house.

The latter was urging him strongly to write the life of Napoleon I.

"Later on," he replied. "Before writing his history, I must finish my work."

"Why begin the First Empire over again?" questioned the historian.

"My uncle was Cæsar," said the Prince with a smile. "I will be Augustus."

exile ended, so that the Strassburg affair, and generally his nephew's behaviour, annoyed him more than most. These hopes were fostered by M. Thiers, who, having met him in June 1837, at Florence, saw the profit he could gain from him for his celebrated *History of the Consulate and Empire*. The cunning little man promised Jérôme to use his efforts to get him a pension from the State and the repeal of the law of exile, only asking him, in return, to supply him with documents on the Imperial family and period. As a matter of course the ex-editor of the *National* prolonged matters all he could, meantime receiving whole chestfuls of papers, and excusing his delay by alleging endless obstacles on the part of Molé, Soult, etc. When he had had seventeen chests his History was finished—and Thiers never gave another thought to King Jérôme.



## CHAPTER IX

### SWITZERLAND AGAIN

A conversation ; Napoleon the Great and the Prince's own future—Decides to remain in Switzerland—His popularity there ; little dinners at Constance ; the marksmen of the Thurgau—Death of Talleyrand—Strained relations between the French and Swiss Governments ; the latter champions the exile—France hurries an army corps to the frontier and threatens war—The Prince will leave the country for England—Departure—A touching incident ; Moësa's farewell—The Prince goes to London, the Baron d'Ambès to Milan—Arese—Mazzini and the Young Italy Society—Revelations.

*December 1837.*—The Prince was twenty-nine in April.

"At my age," he said to me with a sigh, "the Emperor had already begun the siege of Toulon. As General-in-Chief he had fought the campaign of Italy, won ten victories, earned the admiration of armies, undertaken the Egyptian expedition. He was a Member of the *Institut*, a popular hero. His prestige was becoming matter of legend, his star was in the ascendant. And I, what am I ? what shall I ever be ?"

I answered him in one word :

"The future. . . ."

He seized my two hands in an ecstasy :

"Yes, d'Ambès, let us hope all things."

\* \* \*

*False reports contradicted.*—It is said—the wish is father to the thought, perhaps—that Louis Napoléon means to return to America. A pure invention—or rather, one purposely designed to mislead. The Prince has had it contradicted in the *Helvétie*. His intention is

to remain in Switzerland. But he has seen fit to bury his grief for a while at the Château of Gottlieben, which his mother had begun, and of which he is completing the repairs. Petty annoyances still continue, and he is prohibited from crossing the Baden frontier—which, all the same, does not prevent his coming pretty often to Constance, where he makes arrangements to meet me.

The idyll with Moësa is ended. The pretty Swiss maiden has gone away to Berne. I do not exactly know what brought about the rupture—some indiscretions and braggings on the girl's part, I imagine. . . . Unless the Prince's passion for Mme Gordon has swallowed up the other. . . .

\* \* \*

*December 1837.*—Colonel Vaudrey is back at Arenaberg. A very sad piece of news reaches me—my father is dead. He was struck down by paralysis some two years ago, but the end came suddenly, when I was far away. I expected this catastrophe, no doubt, but I never supposed it would come so soon.

So here I am, at twenty-four, orphaned of father and mother, alone in the world, with friends, certainly, and a respectable fortune, but without any to guide and counsel me. . . . The best course seems to me to attach myself to this other man's destiny—a precarious one, but fascinating in its possibilities—as a friend, as a partisan . . . but likewise as a philosopher and an interested spectator.

I am starting for home to settle my family affairs.

\* \* \*

*End of May 1838.*—I am back at Constance. The Prince himself will very soon be returning to Arenaberg. His grief is consoled; once more he is gay, or rather—for the word does not suit his natural gravity—he is once more cordial, smiling, full of high hopes.

No sign of discouragement, in spite of Strassburg, in spite of the annoyances of the French Government. The fact is, he knows how Switzerland now sympathizes with

him. A regular campaign has begun in his favour. He is spoken of as *a citizen of Switzerland, a bourgeois of the Thurgau*. They defy King Louis Philippe to interfere with his rights as a free man in a free country, under the protection of a free people. Touching !

We meet the same old friends : Macquard, who keeps us posted in French politics ; Persigny, back from London ; Parquin, who, it appears, is going to sell Wolsberg to the Prince ; Widomski (he is going to leave us next month), and the rest. Almost every evening Louis Napoléon comes to dine here at Constance, and very often I dine with him and a few others at the *Hôtel de l'Aigle*.

Yesterday he told us how, on his arrival at Gottlieben, they had built a triumphal arch, under which he passed, while acclamations rose on every side.

In the Thurgau Persigny and I have had his portrait distributed by dozens. It is to be seen in nearly every dwelling, just as Napoleon I.'s adorns so many houses and hovels in France. We do all we can to keep up his prestige.

On the 20th of this month forty-five officers gave a grand banquet at Kreuzlingen in his honour, and the Prince's thanks strongly moved all present.

On the 23rd the marksmen of the Thurgau elected him President of their annual muster at Dissenhofen.

The Prince has sent to the Federal Shooting Competition, now opening at St. Gall, a gun ornamented with gold and silver, to be given as a prize to the victor at the special target (*cible*), called the "*cible du patriotisme*."

\* \* \*

*Undated*.—I have just heard the news here of the death of Talleyrand. The man who occupied so large a place in life is become merely a subject for newspaper articles. Before vanishing from the scene he had put himself *en règle* with God by confessing his sins, with the Church by retracting his errors, with the world by making a panegyric of diplomacy. He is said to have left memoirs, which are not to be read till fifty years hence.



I feel certain they will contain many things, to use his own expression, that may hang a man. Anyhow, I think he will be soon forgotten. They say his dog mourns for him. If Fontenelle were still alive, he might find a pretty pastime in writing a dialogue between Talleyrand and Napoleon in the other world.

\* \* \*

October 1838.—Quaint, this quarrel between Switzerland, so small and so proud, on the one hand, and France, powerful and vindictive, on the other, *à propos* of Louis Napoléon. And what a sad end to it! We have the Prince, tracked down like a wild beast, forced to leave the country again, to remove from Switzerland, to quit the home where he had rekindled a hearth for himself!

But this is consoling—they are afraid of him! Here is the history of the miserable business.

After Laity's condemnation the Prince's expulsion was formally demanded. It was Molé who wrote to Montabello on behalf of the King. The Swiss Republic declares that Louis Napoléon is a citizen, a bourgeois of the Thurgau. The King of France denies this, appealing to Article 25 of the Constitution of the Canton, in which it is laid down that a foreigner can only become a Swiss subject after having renounced his status as a citizen of his native country. The Prince retorts that France, by banishing him, refuses *ipso facto* to recognize him as one of its citizens. This makes the King and his gang very angry. This much is gained, that at any rate the Great Council of the Canton has examined the question. This done, it decides that the French claim is inadmissible.

This piece of audacity turns Molé's anger into fury. Poor man, on this legal point, he is massing an army corps on the frontier!

They are afraid! They are afraid!

Louis Napoléon naturally was unwilling to let a war break out whereof he would have been the cause and to risk for the sake of a point of honour the death of Swiss citizens. He gave way, writing a letter to

M. Anderwers, President of the Little Council of the Thurgau, to inform him that he meant to go.

"I am leaving," he told the Landmann in substance, "I am leaving a country where my presence would serve as pretext for such great calamities as would be involved in an armed conflict ; but I shall never forget that this country, resisting for a month and more the pressure of a powerful State, and ready to make fresh sacrifices to maintain its dignity and rights, was lavish in its exhibition of esteem and affection towards myself. I am leaving, of my own free will, places that have been dear to me for so many reasons, but I trust that this separation will not be for ever and that I may yet be able to return to the refuge which a residence of twenty years and the rights I have acquired constituted for me a second fatherland."

*October 14th.*—The Prince leaves Switzerland to-day, furnished with a passport certified by the signatures of the Prussian and Baden ministers and the Dutch consul. What a gathering of friends at Arenaberg ! What poignant emotion ! We were a company of thirty or more that mustered to bid him farewell. He clasped our hands and uttered words of regret and hope suitable to the painful occasion. Persigny wore the frown of a man thinking to himself "our hour will come." Conneau was sighing ; Vaudrey shaking his fist at fate. The worthy Thélín, who promised Queen Hortense on her death-bed never to leave her son, and his fellow-servant, Fritz Rickenbach, had tears in their eyes.

We set off together in a score of *calèches*. Two kilometres from Constance I saw the Prince beckon to the coachman to pull up his four horses, suddenly, in the middle of the road. Wondering, I was asking myself the why and wherefore of this unexpected stoppage, when to my great surprise, I saw a girl standing with hands clasped in an indescribable attitude of despair and supplication.

It was Moësa !

Where had she come from ? How had she known of this departure ? Why was she there ?



We all came to a halt, naturally enough, and got out of our carriages. The Prince begged us to let him go on his way by himself and allow him to take us, one and all, by the hand for the last time.

Was it part of his original intention to say good-bye at this particular point, or was he for inventing an excuse to say a few words to Moësa? Be this as it may, he said them, in a very low voice, and then repeated his farewells to us. But now his eyes were brimming with tears.

He was parting from the friendship and love of his Swiss friends, leaving behind a whole past, anxious and agitated no doubt, but with intervals of quiet study, peace and content, amid the rich calm of the mountains.

He is going to travel through Germany and Holland and embark at Rotterdam for England. Persigny, Vaudrey, Montauban, Conneau, go with him. I shall go and join him later no doubt.

\* \* \*

*Lombardy, November 1838.*—Before going to England (if I do go there) I am making a journey in Lombardy that is not without importance because of the conversations I am having there on the Prince's affairs, and notably with M. Arese, of whom I want to say a few words here. He is a highly interesting man, and might well come to play a part in the life of Louis Napoléon and consequently in my own . . .

Knowing me to be an intimate friend of the Prince's, though, as it happened, I only once had the opportunity of meeting him at Arenaberg where he was a more frequent visitor perhaps than myself, he made several confidential statements to me, some being of a rather singular nature. It was in 1831, in fact, that Arese lived at Arenaberg where I was only presented to the Prince in 1833.

Arese is thirty-three. He has the advantage over me of eight years' experience, eight years of active life. His mother was wealthy and shone at the Court of Eugène de Beauharnais, who was then Viceroy of Italy. On the fall of the Empire his parents and kinsmen found the



Austrian yoke hard to bear and entertained dreams of a free and independent Italy. Moreover, the family and all connected with it detested Francis I., who in 1815 had recovered his hold on their country. François Arese's uncle, who had been a Colonel in Napoleon's service and his bosom friend, Confaloneri, even took an active part in the Carbonari conspiracy of 1821, in which was involved Silvio Pellico. All were condemned, deported, treated as criminals. François was sixteen, and from that time forth his heart was full of gall and bitterness.

Then he, too, began to conspire. He formed a little Secret Society, including Colonel Zanolì, the Marquis Rosales, Truschi, Bellerio, Tinelli, the brothers Adda and the brothers Resta, the Pole Dembrowski, Prince Belgiojoso and others, men devoted to the Republican ideal, enemies to the death of Metternich, always endeavouring to recruit their band from the *élite* of Milan.

Success did not crown his efforts, for the aristocrats to whom he addressed himself preferred, as a rule, a life of pleasure. Nevertheless, Arese did not lose hope.

It was in 1826 that François Arese visited Rome in company with his mother, who went there to join Queen Hortense. The latter she had met before at Milan when the Emperor's daughter-in-law used often to be at that city in former days to see her brother Eugène. There were established between François Arese and Louis Napoléon those friendly relations that were destined to grow closer from day to day.

Carbonarism attracted Louis Napoléon to its standard. I have related what I knew of the events of 1830-31, what I thought about the death of Queen Hortense's other son—whom people will persist in believing to have been carried off by measles, but who I am equally positive was got rid of by assassination—what followed from the rising of the Romagna. I have only lately learned that it was Monseigneur Mastai<sup>1</sup> who gave 30,000 francs and guides to the volunteers to help them escape the Austrian measures of repression.

<sup>1</sup> Became Pope in 1846 under the name of Pius IX. He was not yet a Cardinal. In 1831 he was Archbishop of Imola.

Meantime Arese and his friends continued to conspire, meeting at the houses of the ladies affiliated to the Masonic 'sect' of the Jardinières, the Grand Mistress of which was the Princess Christine Trivulzio de Belgiojoso. Arese was also connected with another "sect," founded by Mazzini,—the Young Italy, then with a Revolutionary Committee with headquarters in Switzerland, then with a conspiracy concocted at Bellinzona, which was discovered.

A strange character, this everlasting maker of plots ! A will of iron. He told me once :

"A country's deliverance is won by talking in whispers !"

Arese had to fly from Milan. Then it was he betook himself to Arenaberg, the home of the Ex-Queen of Holland, who afforded him hospitality for over a year.

"When my mother wrote to the Queen," Arese confided in me, "the latter was at the moment at Mannheim. She was so obliging as to answer at once that I had only to present myself at the château and stay there till her return. Impossible to open the door to a friend in a more flattering fashion ! I spent a charming year, talking, fishing, shooting with Louis Napoléon, and inspiring him with that love of Italy which will end, I am convinced, in the freeing of my country. . . . Indeed, Louis Napoléon is one of a thousand. He is quick to understand, and has a noble and a generous heart. He has always welcomed the Italian refugees I have from time to time presented to him, and who did not always repay his kindness.

It appears that about 1832 the Comtesse Arese's idea changed, and she turned Austrophile, partly from a wish for peace, partly because she longed to see her son again and get him married. At that very time Louis Napoléon preferred he should marry his cousin, Mlle Tascher de la Pagerie. Arese declined. The Prince was annoyed and the Princess furious. Then François departed for Algeria and enlisted in the Foreign Legion, saw some fighting, formed some valuable friendships, and eventually returned when he knew that his mother's feelings were appeased.



The old life began again, the life of politics and conspiracies. Arese resumed intriguing at Milan. He was aware of the Strassburg preparations, but did not approve of them, and even removed himself from the stage in which was played out the drama that ended with the Prince's banishment to America. Then, in face of the failure he had foretold, he once more took up the rôle of faithful friend and started for New York to keep the exile company.

For a moment I was on the point of following him, but an event I cannot trust to paper for the present prevented me. Arese landed in America before the Prince, because he went direct, while the exile was taken by a long detour. Three whole months they lived together at New York under the same roof, and the Milanese kept alive in the Prince's heart fervent aspirations for Italian independence and a fierce hatred of Austria.<sup>1</sup> He brought him into relations with the Italian refugees of those parts, of whom no mention was ever made to me—I wonder why—by Louis Napoléon on his return.

When the Prince came back to Europe, Arese remained behind to visit the United States till the spring of this year.

While he was away on these travels Queen Hortense had died, bequeathing him a piece of jewelry in memory of the great affection she had entertained for him.

So here is Arese back at Milan. An amnesty, in fact, has been decreed in favour of those condemned for political offences on the occasion of the coronation of the new Emperor of Austria, Ferdinand I. In any case, there are signs of relaxation, discouragement. The yoke is forgotten, and Arese suffers grievously to see it. He is always beseeching me to rekindle in Louis Napoléon's heart the memory of the talks at Arenaberg and at New York.

This is all very well and very fine ; but, after all, Arese speaks as an Italian patriot. Is a French patriot necessarily bound to hold the same language ?

<sup>1</sup> These revelations are of high importance ; they throw a flood of light on the whole circumstances of the war of Italy.



## CHAPTER X

### THE PRINCE IN LONDON

"Much Ado about Nothing"—"The Man of To-morrow"; like uncle, like nephew—Metternich—The Château d'Arenaberg sold—The Prince is the lion of the hour in London—A duel on Wimbledon Common—Carlton Gardens—Gore House and Lady Blessington; Count d'Orsay—Miss Howard—*Les Idées Napoléoniennes*—The Prince confides his new project to the Baron d'Ambès—A descent on Boulogne decided on—Preparations; Conneau sewing on buttons; the *Edinburgh Castle* purchased—The *Belle Poule* sets out to bring home the ashes of the Great Napoleon.

*December 1838.*—The whole of this Franco-Swiss difficulty is more or less of a farce. In one word, it comes to what Shakespeare calls "much ado about nothing." True, there was a moment of effervescence. In France 40,000 men received orders to furbish swords and bayonets, in Switzerland the volunteers were called out; but all the while the pretty girls of Geneva were dancing at the Ferney balls with the French officers, and the quadrilles would finish up with an exchange of hand-pressings and embraces.

\* \* \*

*Note inserted later.*—I am in receipt of a parcel of Paris and London papers. They are behind time, but what they say is still good to remember. Nearly the whole French press, except the *Débats*, seized with a fierce and sudden fit of independence, disapproves of the policy of the Tuileries. The *Constitutionnel*, *Siècle*, *Gazette de France*, *Courier Français*, *National*, *Journal de Paris*—all are unanimous in speaking well of the Prince, whose moderation they appreciate. All are of opinion that

Louis Philippe's Ministers have piled folly on folly, at the same time covering themselves with ridicule and affording the heir of the Bonapartes an opportunity to intervene in the future of the country. He is become "the man of to-morrow." The Napoleonist cause has received a sanction that consecrates its claims in the eyes of the public. It is no longer a flattering illusion cherished by a few lovers of paradox, a few last adherents of a vanished past ; it is a party whose leader has given proof of personal worth, a party round which a popular movement is already rallying. The July Monarchy has done him good service, in a way recommending him to the suffrages of the masses by its ill-contrived attempts to set them against him. He was reported wavering and poor-spirited, he was denied high qualities whether of head or heart. Now people are forced to allow he can think and act judiciously, measure his words, and show proof of character. No one now can fail to see they have a man to deal with, and this man a true Bonaparte, who has learned to profit by experience, and who, justified by the lessons of history, is making ready for the future. We have often heard the saying of the Brienne professor about Napoleon quoted : "He will succeed if circumstances are propitious." I think it will be with the nephew as it was with the uncle.

\* \* \*

1839.—I shall never go to Arenaberg again. Arenaberg is sold. The Prince has sold it in order to subsidize two Parisian journals : *Le Commerce*, under the management of Macquard and Mauguin ; *La Capitale*, under that of Crouy-Chanel, to whom the Prince paid 140,000 francs and provided Paul Merruan as editor.

I shall never go to Arenaberg again ! I am starting for England.

\* \* \*

London, 1839.—I have come here to join the Prince. I live in the Marylebone Road, a very short way from Regent Street. He is installed in Carlton Terrace, after

making a short stay at Fenton's Hotel and then in Waterloo Place. He has a numerous household and five horses, two being saddle-horses. We are quite near the Athenæum and Travellers' Clubs, in a very fine quarter of the town; and we are not dull.

The Prince has been warmly welcomed by the best English society. He is the lion of the hour. I cannot but admire my noble friend. What easy adaptability he possesses! He is as much at ease here as at Arenaberg. He speaks English as he used to speak German and Italian. He shows himself the "perfect gentleman" in England, as he proved himself a good shot and a hearty beer-drinker in Switzerland. Here, as there, everybody is full of consideration and polite attentions towards him.

We go to the theatre, to the races, to society teas, we frequent evening-parties, where conversation, play, flirting, are the order of the day. *Life à l'anglaise*, a life full of triumphs for him and novel experiences for me.

Whatever London has of choice and elegant is in relations with the Prince. Lord Fitz-Harris is more than a friend already: he is a brother. The Dukes of Somerset and of Beaufort, of Bedford and of Montrose, find pleasure in his society. The Earls of Errol and of Scarborough, of Chesterfield and of Durham deem it an honour to know him. Wellington is charming; Benjamin Disraeli comes to see him. Sir Lytton Bulwer and Sir Henry Holland, Count d'Orsay, Walter Savage, Londonderry—the greatest names of the nobility—figure at his receptions, though he makes a point of not attending Court or appearing at Ministers' houses. The Earl of Eglinton has invited him this year to his famous tournament. Grand dinners everywhere. And he talks cleverly, adroitly! The shade of Napoleon I. following him everywhere, he often finds himself in delicate situations for a talker. He always extricates himself with admirable tact.

Everywhere he is received agreeably, often ceremoniously. Happy and flattered he before whose door stops his carriage, on the panels of which is displayed the Imperial eagle. The newspapers describe his social



Je vous prie de me dire  
 si Liguotti est traduit en français.  
 Lesquels ~~en~~ <sup>en</sup> ~~l'annuaire~~ <sup>l'annuaire</sup> Villain, ou  
 même L'annuaire ont traduit en  
 français, je voudrais le savoir. Si  
 par hasard, vous en avez quelques-uns  
 envoyés à moi: s'il n'en  
 je voudrais que vous sachiez un  
 travail pour venir si vous pouvez venir  
 chez moi. Demandez de M. à M. si j'en  
 en plaquerai ce que je desirais. A  
 on ne doit pas en dire  
 d'autant traduit... je s'en en m.  
 si cela est possible en grand plaisir  
 à Paris s'en

AUTOGRAPH LETTER OF NAPOLEON-LOUIS BONAPARTE,  
 ELDER BROTHER OF NAPOLEON III.

In the collection of A. M. Broadley, Esq.

# Proclamation DE PRINCE NAPOLEON-LOUIS à l'Armée

SOLDATS !

La France est faite pour commander et elle obéit. Vous êtes l'élite de son peuple  
 et on ne peut pas vous enlever le commandement. Vous êtes faits pour commander, et vous  
 vous le commandez. Le noble militaire ne se laisse pas gouverner. Il se commande. Il se  
 commande. Il se commande. Il se commande. Il se commande. Il se commande. Il se commande.  
 Après les victoires, qui étaient devenues les gloires d'Arsène, d'Antoine, de Louis, de  
 nos pères, et de ce qui est plus que tout cela, la reconnaissance et l'estime de vos  
 compatriotes, vous accueilliez les victoires, vous les accueilliez à bras armés, et vous  
 les accueilliez à bras armés. Vous les accueilliez à bras armés. Vous les accueilliez à bras armés.  
 Mais vous et moi il y a des lieux de grandeur, et tout autour de nous les mêmes lieux  
 et les mêmes lieux. Les mêmes lieux, et tout autour de nous les mêmes lieux. Les mêmes lieux, et tout autour de nous les mêmes lieux.

Hâtez-vous, j'en suis sûr, de l'Empire pour l'Empire. Hâtez-vous, j'en suis sûr, de l'Empire pour l'Empire.  
 Hâtez-vous, j'en suis sûr, de l'Empire pour l'Empire. Hâtez-vous, j'en suis sûr, de l'Empire pour l'Empire.  
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 Hâtez-vous, j'en suis sûr, de l'Empire pour l'Empire. Hâtez-vous, j'en suis sûr, de l'Empire pour l'Empire.

NAPOLÉON.  
 Le 20 MONTMORILLON, le 20 de Major général.  
 Le 20 MONTMORILLON, le 20 de Major général.  
 Le 20 MONTMORILLON, le 20 de Major général.  
 Le 20 MONTMORILLON, le 20 de Major général.  
 Le 20 MONTMORILLON, le 20 de Major général.  
 Le 20 MONTMORILLON, le 20 de Major général.

THE BOULOGNE PROCLAMATION.

From an original copy in the collection of A. M. Broadley, Esq.



successes, his pursuits, his receptions, his visits. Lord Bloomfield paid him all the honours when he visited the Arsenal. *The Times*, *The Morning Post*, *The Courier*, speak of him, and when he visits the provinces he is greeted with the same deference. The notabilities go out of their way to welcome him, at Birmingham, at Liverpool, at Manchester. Fêtes are got up in his honour. Gore House is become a rendezvous where the most distinguished people are to be found. I have seen d'Ouin there, and Carrington, and even Alfred de Vigny. . . .

One minute blot on this bright picture! Latterly he came very near fighting a duel with that dismal individual known as the Comte Léon, illegitimate son of the Emperor, who has come here to claim of King Joseph the execution of I cannot say what dispositions Cardinal Fesch would seem to have made in his favour, but which not only Louis Napoléon himself, but all the family, by common consent, refuse to take seriously.

Two coarsely worded letters from this personage forced the Prince to send his seconds—Parquin and d'Orsay, who demanded on his behalf, as the offended party, that they should fight with swords. At seven next morning the adversaries met on Wimbledon Common. But at this point M. Léon announced his wish to fight with pistols. The result a long argument, which allowed the police to interfere before the Prince, who, however, had ended by agreeing to the weapon proposed, had time to chastise the insolent fellow. It was plain the latter only played off this farce in order to fritter away the very short time he had in which to measure himself against the Prince.

Each went home, not without having had to give bail before recovering their freedom, and so the ridiculous business ended.

\* \* \*

*Note inserted.*—The Prince loves women's society—yet another point of resemblance with Napoleon I. He enjoys their conversation. The drawing-rooms of Gore House afford him plenty of opportunities, where Lady



Blessington surrounds herself with the *élite* of pretty women. Very agreeable herself, albeit spoiling the charm of her conversation by her affectation, she has, they say, a *liaison* with Count d'Orsay. At her receptions the Prince meets a passionate admirer of the Great Emperor's nephew in the person of Miss Howard. There, too, he finds sometimes a pretty Englishwoman of the "Keepsake" style, a Countess to boot, in whose society he forgets Moësa.

\* \* \*

*London*, 1840.—The Prince now lives in Carlton Gardens, having left Lord Cardigan's mansion to take possession of that of Lord Ripon. He is no loser by the change.

What a fine drawing-room full of noble souvenirs and hallowed relics, besides the portraits of the Emperor, of the Empress, of Queen Hortense, the coronation ring, the wedding ring (Joséphine's), the tricolour cashmere scarf that Napoleon I. wore at the Battle of the Pyramids, portraits of all the Imperial family, the famous talisman of Charlemagne found in his tomb at Aix-la-Chapelle and presented by the Clergy of the Cathedral to the Emperor in 1804, a medallion with twin portraits painted by Isabey,—I cannot tell all the wonderful treasures, doubly dear to their owner, who guards them piously as heirlooms.

The Prince drives or rides every day. Sometimes he takes me with him in his cabriolet, and we talk—a little of the past, a great deal of the future. He drives with the same skill he shows in all physical exercises. He does not pay visits only to the important personages of the British capital; he frequents the libraries too, and has just published another book: *Les Idées Napoléoniennes*.

*Les Idées Napoléoniennes*.—It is the synopsis, eminently clear and distinct, of the general thesis of democratic empire, one always maintained by Louis Napoléon. It is the moral testament of Napoleon I., risen from the tomb of St. Helena. In it Louis speaks like a prophet. He has the ardent and energetic soul of a saviour of peoples. He never loses faith in his star.

He desires to continue his uncle's work, the task of the Emperor "who contributed more than any other to hasten the reign of freedom by preserving the moral influence of the Revolution and diminishing the apprehensions it inspired." He shows how the Napoleonic ideas submitted to the plébiscite have received an endorsement more and more emphatic on the part of the people, which voted with ever-growing enthusiasm for the institutions of 1793, of the Year III., of the Year VIII., for the Consulate for Life, and finally in 1804 for the hereditary Empire.

*June 1840.*—I had a long conversation with the Prince this morning, who was much more talkative than usual. He told me: "It is Boulogne I have decided on as my point of attack. I know I can tell you everything, because you are a perfect Paladin of discretion; and then you are just as impatient for success as I am myself."

Then the Prince unfolded his whole plan. He has purchased guns in Birmingham and uniforms at the *Marché du Temple* in Paris. Servants have been engaged in France and conveyed to London, where he has also had the uniforms forwarded. Dr. Conneau has sewn on the buttons. He has procured a printing-press, and is printing off his proclamations himself.

\* \* \*

*July 1840.*—Great news! The French Government claims possession of the ashes of Napoleon I. Was the idea to embarrass England? Lord Palmerston puts frankly and freely at the Government's disposition the great man's coffin, without the smallest hesitation. On May 12th the Comte de Rémusat asked the Chamber to vote a million to bring home from St. Helena the illustrious remains, which the Prince de Joinville undertakes to go and fetch.

The *Belle Poule* has just sailed.

\* \* \*

The Prince is overjoyed at the mighty burst of Napoleonic enthusiasm that is everywhere manifest. He

has spoken of it these last days to all of us who are devoted to his interests. The hour has come to try afresh the scheme that failed four years ago at Strassburg. France is ready, more than ever ready, to welcome the successor of Napoleon I.

\* \* \*

*August 4th, 1840.*—In haste. . . .

Louis Napoléon has chartered, under an assumed name, a steamer, the *Edinburgh Castle*. He has contrived to complete all preparations without the Cabinets of London and Paris knowing one word of his projects. Normanby, Guizot, have not seen a thing. It is like a fairy tale!

\* \* \*

We are going aboard immediately. To-morrow we shall be off Boulogne. Who knows if, the day after, Louis Napoléon will not be on the throne of France?



## CHAPTER XI

### "L'AFFAIRE DE BOULOGNE"

*August 1840*

The Baron placards the dead-walls of Boulogne with the Prince's proclamation—A pitiful fiasco—Worse than Strassburg—A tame eagle—The landing and its repulse—Pot-shots from the cliff—The French Press hostile—Reasons of the failure—Louis Napoléon at the Conciergerie—Mlle Eugénie de Montijo—The Baron d'Ambès visits the Prince in prison—A visit to the blind Madame de Récamier—Mme Lenormand as a prophetess.

*August 5th, 1840.*—I have a bale of proclamations and I have already had a number displayed on all the dead-walls of the town. The Prince had entrusted me with the task of publishing and placarding them. I am convinced they will produce a notable effect. They breathe the very soul of the Emperor.

\* \* \*

*August 10th, 1840.*—Another set-back, more lamentable than that at Strassburg. Once more our dreams are shattered, but perhaps for ever this time! I have not seen the Prince, whom they will certainly restrain for the future from all possibility of giving trouble. I cannot say if he still keeps his confidence after this Boulogne affair. I really think I have definitely and finally lost mine.

*Qui vivra verra.* . . . Let us, at any rate, put down in black and white in my poor pages the details of this extraordinary fiasco.

We were sixty-two sworn confederates when we left London. Now we are one, and one only—myself! We were sixty-two: first and foremost the old guard, the

faithful few, the familiars of Arenaberg, the comrades of Strassburg—Querelles and Parquin, Persigny and Vaudrey, Conneau, the bravest of the brave. Add to these valuable recruits enlisted in these last few years: Montholon, who had kept the Emperor company on the rock of St. Helena, Colonel Voisin, Commandant Mésonan, Bataille, Lombard, and Bachin, Bouffet de Montauban, Laborde, Orsi, and the Prince's foster-brother, Bure by name, Ornano, Forestier, Captain Hunin, Aladenize; forty<sup>1</sup> more who had faith in the Prince's star, and whom death has taken or a prison is to entomb!

We had munitions of war, money, horses . . . and a live eagle to symbolize the return of the Other! All this, on August 3rd, was carried on board the *Edinburgh Castle*. On the 4th we went after our friends, distributed here and there and brought them in by small groups. Then, not to excite suspicion, we crossed by a succession of long tacks, and only cast anchor during the night of the 5th off Wimereux, a league from Boulogne. In four voyages men and material, all, was got ashore. The *douaniers* then arrived on the scene. Parquin and I frankly avow our plans and offer them money, but in vain. This struck me as an ill augury for our eventual success.

Nevertheless, we continued our march. At five o'clock we reached Boulogne. In the Place d'Alton we parley with the four men and the sergeant posted there. Again a refusal to join us!

"Another failure!" Parquin whispers in my ear. "If in two hours from now Boulogne is not ours, we are done for, by ——!"

According to our agreement, I was to see after the general population, as I had done at Strassburg. I had made all necessary arrangements four days before, but had then returned to London to inform the Prince of various particulars. On arriving at Boulogne I quitted my companions, and hurried to the taverns where friends had assembled to wait for me. While the little band of the

<sup>1</sup> Included in the sixty-two were thirty or more time-expired soldiers hired in France as domestics. See d'Ambès.

faithful was trying, with the help of Lieutenant Aladenize, to raise the 42nd of the line, I went through the town with my men, all shouting “Vive l’Empereur !”

Alas ! neither army nor population seconded us. The gates of the barracks were shut to us, and we had to withdraw. Perhaps it would have been wise to do no more. Bataille and Mésonan proposed to go to the Colonne de la Grande-Armée on the downs above the town and unfurl the Imperial flag. But a squad of men from the 42nd of the line had been detached, and these fell upon us.

The Prince showed himself a hero, and was for dying there, at the foot of the column. I shall never forget his noble gallantry. But he was to live ; he had work to do ; and we dragged him away.

I make a last attempt to raise the citizens, and so find myself separated from my friends, who reach the shore, pursued by the soldiers and the National Guard, which is sent to arrest them. The Prince and some of my friends, it appears, threw themselves into the sea to escape ; but they were cowardly enough to pepper them from the cliffs, like water-fowl. Voisin was hit twice ; Hunin was drowned ; another was killed ; others fell seriously wounded, and lay fainting and covered with blood. Persigny, Conneau, Mésonan, captured by gendarmes in boats, were brought back to the beach, and all my comrades were made prisoners. For the good of the cause I thought it best to escape, mixing with my contingent of “shouters,” and distributing money among them to win their connivance. So here I am, the same as after Strassburg, alone, abandoned, frustrated. . . .

\* \* \*

I have been in Paris for the last twelve hours. I read the papers. I keep myself informed. I see our friends. I am doing all I can to make good what was perhaps a mistake, for on reflection I begin to think we had a poorer chance than at Strassburg.

Success to the brave, the proverb says . . . and also the cup of gall, sometimes !



The newspapers desert us. Yesterday they were for us. Yes, the proverb will always prove true : When the sky grows black, good-bye to friends ! The whole Press is hard on us. They talk of us as madmen or fools, grotesque malefactors—and that is the most painful of all, for failure, especially when it involves men's deaths, should be entitled to more indulgence.

*August 11th.*—I tramp the streets of Paris in search of news. I know now why we failed. The Prince thought he could count on General Magnan. He had instructed Mésonan to offer him four hundred thousand francs, a hundred thousand to be handed him on the nail. He had likewise given him to understand that he was reserving the bâton of a Marshal of France for him. Mésonan was not persuasive enough, nor seductive enough. General Magnan now boasts to any one who cares to listen to him of having refused these offers. I am convinced it was possible to have gained him over. He said no only because he was afraid of letting go the substance to catch at the shadow. If the Prince had succeeded this incorruptible gentleman would instantly have protested his devotion to the Bonapartist cause. I wish I had the power to read the bottom of the man's soul.<sup>1</sup>

*Additional note.*—It is certain the plans failed because they were ill-conceived. The Prince counted on the Army. As a matter of fact, in spite of all the measures taken, all the money and eloquence expended, the Army was not with us, nor the Republicans either. All they thought of was to exploit the name of Napoleon to set up a Republic that should be a manger where appetites of every sort could be satisfied. The Napoleonist ideas, so noble and generous, had found no real support among this hungry crew. They were getting ready to pluck the eagle.

\* \* \*

*August 12th.*—I have been handed a circular issued by the Minister of War, Cubières. It is dated August 7th,

<sup>1</sup> After the proclamation of the Second Empire General Magnan became Marshal of France, Grand-Veneur of the Emperor, and Commander-in-Chief of the Army of Paris.

five o'clock in the evening, and proves how alarmed they were at Paris at the first tidings of the attempt. “Driven back into the floods that had vomited them forth,” this precious document reads, “Louis Bonaparte and all his adherents have been captured, killed, or drowned.” The *Moniteur* actually printed this melodramatic sentence, that might surely have fallen from the pen of Ennery. The Government advertises its success with the magniloquent phrases, the superb gestures of Frédérick, the Talma of the Boulevard. It was deemed necessary to publish in the *Journal Officiel* that the troops of the line were *worthy of all admiration*—another theatrical expression! The truth is, troops and National Guard vied with each other in ferocity. The fugitives had reached the seashore, pursued at the point of the bayonet, and had thrown themselves into the water, when, before they could reach the boat where they hoped to find safety, they shot them down without mercy. Those even who kept shouting that they surrendered were not spared. They were killed at point-blank range. If there were no more victims than was afterwards found to be the case, this must be attributed to pure chance. I am told that the Prince himself was hit by a ball that was lost in his uniform.

The most odious thing about it is that the journals which till then had supported Louis Napoléon against the Ministry are now flouting him, one and all. Yesterday all were talking of his mission, all recognized his rights as a Pretender; to-day they are making fun of him. Desertion all along the line. Such are the general orders given to the whole Press, not the Parisian Press only, but also abroad. I am making a collection of the articles in the *Débats*, the *Constitutionnel*, the *Presse*, *The Times*, *The Morning Post*. It will prove interesting, perhaps, to re-read them in ten years' time, for who can tell what will happen to-morrow?

*August 14th.*—On the 9th the Prince was transferred to the Fortress of Ham. As he left the Château where he had been confined at Boulogne he was able, while descending the stairway leading to the courtyard, to



throw a glance towards the windows where his companions in misfortune stood, the men whose fate causes him more anxiety than his own. He called "Farewell" to them, and he could catch their words: "Farewell, Prince; the shade of the Emperor will watch over you." Then he got into one of the two carriages waiting his departure. Dragoons escorted them. So afraid were the authorities his friends might come and rescue him that they had ranged sentinels all along his route.

\* \* \*

*August 15th.*—I have just learned—for one never knows the news till the day after to-morrow or even the day after that—that the Prince left Ham on the 12th, and has arrived in Paris by carriage under escort of the Departmental Gendarmerie and the Municipal Guard. It was all done secretly; the newspapers had been urged to say nothing. The object was to prevent crowds collecting in front of the Conciergerie, at which prison it was arranged he should arrive between midnight and one o'clock in the morning. He has been given the room once occupied by Fieschi. He is kept absolutely isolated; even his valet de chambre has been refused access to him. Three attendants keep him under surveillance, never taking their eyes off him. But there is no fear of his attempting his life, even if he were left the means of doing so. I know his character. He will face the judges as he has faced destiny.

\* \* \*

*Note inserted.*—The Préfet of Police, Gabriel Delessert, entertained at dinner to-day the Comtesse de Montijo, wife of a Spanish senator. She was accompanied by her daughter Eugénie, quite a young girl, of uncommon beauty. The Señorita in question is deeply interested in the Prince. She was full of indignation on hearing he was subjected to treatment only adopted towards great criminals. She sees in him a hero like those of the *Romancero* (Romance of the Cid). She asked the Préfet of Police if she could not be present with her mother



at the trial in the tribune reserved for the public. If he is condemned she means to go and see him in prison. She is a girl of vivid imagination. Mother and daughter stayed on the balcony to watch the prisoner go by.<sup>1</sup>

\* \* \*

The Prince will be judged by the Chamber of Peers. This decision was only arrived at after lively discussions. The Chancellor, Pasquier, a man of prudence and astuteness, was openly opposed to it. Evidently he is for keeping an eye on the future. The Duc d’Orléans, on the contrary, who is very active in the matter, holds that no other course is open. No doubt it can be foreseen that many Peers, unable to forget all they owe to Napoleon I., will absent themselves at the critical moment and that hardly half the House will sit at the trial; but confidence is felt in the devotion to the Crown of such as do attend to secure a condemnation. Already it is all practically settled. Indeed the Duc d’Orléans has forestalled the sentence. I know from one of his intimates that he has written to the Prince de Joinville: “Not death, but a good imprisonment and a quick trial.”

What is beyond doubt is this: they want to get done with the affair as soon as possible. At the Court the sensation is really very great, though they put the best face on a bad business. Guizot, to make himself agreeable too, declares it is the end of the Bonapartist intrigues. But perhaps Louis Philippe is not altogether convinced. In any case, he follows the advice of the Duc d’Orléans. He means to utilize the opportunity to recover lost popularity—a recovery they are setting to work to engineer.

\* \* \*

*September 5th.*—I have secured permission to go and see the Prince in his prison. Oh! it was no easy thing!

<sup>1</sup> Little did Mlle de Montijo foresee at that time that one day the Prince would set on her brow the Imperial crown.—Baron d’Ambès.

But I have this unexpected chance in my favour, that I am not known to have been one of the participators in the Boulogne attempt. Few people knew me in that town, and I came directly afterwards to Paris. I have declared I was a stranger to the enterprise, that I was seen in London on the eve of the Prince's departure, but that since August 3rd I had been in Paris. Friends provided me with precious *alibis*. In a word, I have succeeded in penetrating into the Prince's dungeon.

And which of us two, Louis or myself, found means to console the other? Why, Louis!

\* \* \*

*September 15th.*—Mme Récamier has been to see him, bearing a permit from the President, Pasquier. I was informed of her visit, and, as she is well aware, I am one of the Prince's intimate friends, I thought she would not deem me over-forward if I called on her at the Abbaye-au-Bois. She received me with affectionate kindness. Every one of her words was as balm to my bleeding heart. Poor woman! How changed I found her! Now quite blind, there is nothing left of the resplendent Béatrix of Canova. Her adopted daughter, Mme Lenormand, was with her. I was indiscreet enough to ask her—the same who surely foretold the end of Saint-Just and Robespierre—what she thought of the Prince's future. She answered me:

“Have no fear; a cloud passing over a star does not quench its brilliance.”

## CHAPTER XII

### BROUGHT TO TRIAL

The trial opens at the Luxembourg—Advocates and accused—Pasquier ; Berryer ; Barrot—The Prince's attitude ; he reads his defence—Popular sympathy—Condemned to "perpetual" imprisonment—A cloud in the East : growing power of Prussia—The ashes of Napoleon I. brought to Paris and deposited in the Invalides—Imposing ceremony—Crowds and enthusiasm—The Emperor's coffin ; anecdote of Victor Hugo.

*September 27th.*—It is for to-morrow. The tribunal will sit at the Luxembourg under the presidency of Pasquier. A selection has been made. Of the fifty-five prisoners, all but twenty-two have been released. The rest are not to answer for their doings. The Prince will be defended by Berryer, assisted by Marie and Ferdinand Barrot. Among the other counsel Jules Favre, a native of Lyons, who they tell me is very eloquent and a Republican.

*September 28th.*—I have just come from the first sitting. The court was crowded ; the accused were brought in at half-past twelve. I saw signs of emotion on the majority of faces. The Judges themselves could not hide their feelings. It is a fact that on those faces one might have thought most impassive there were distinct tokens of discomposure. How could it have been otherwise ? Many of the men sitting there to pronounce sentence on the Prince could not forget what they owed to the Emperor. Louis Napoléon came in, followed by Maître Berryer. Some one beside me said : "He has nothing of Napoleon I." The speaker meant nothing in the way of physical likeness. I muttered : "He has his soul." My voice rose higher than I had intended. I heard a "H'sh !



h'sh!"—but I noticed my neighbour agreed with me. The Prince smiled behind his dark chestnut moustache—I am sure I saw him smile. Did he see me? I think his eyes travelled in my direction. He was dressed in black and wore the *plaque* of the Legion of Honour.

Pasquier proceeded to the usual questions to establish identity. Then the Prince got up and asked leave to read a few words he had ready in writing in his defence. All present were stirred at the sound of his voice.

\* \* \*

*Undated.*—The trial goes on. It is expected to last till two o'clock. The Prince's pronouncement has had its effect. Everybody, even his enemies, admit its eloquence. Many look upon it as a manifesto. Those who have broken their oath to the Empire and trampled underfoot with an ingratitude there is no gainsaying their original convictions cannot deny that the Prince has risen superior to his Judges. The accused has become accuser.

The Prince is very dignified all through the hearings. His composure never deserts him. He sits, one leg crossed over the other, much at his ease, as if he were attending a lecture. When questioned, he answers with a plain yes or no, and will never add any explanations except when his fellow-accused are involved. Then he speaks out energetically enough, taking the whole responsibility on himself.

*Another note undated.*—Berryer's speech is one of the finest impromptu pleadings ever uttered. The illustrious orator never concealed the fact from himself that the case was lost from the first; but using the right he enjoyed, to speak with perfect openness, he thundered out the truth, and it has produced a far-reaching echo. The papers have printed his speech *in extenso*, accompanying it with comments that bring out every passage in full relief.

When the famous pleader sat down a quiver of repressed excitement ran through his audience. I could see hands itching to applaud, and they would have done so, had not the solemnity of the occasion checked them. But all through this magnificent feat of oratory, how

often did I note gestures of assent, tokens of agreement, signs of profound emotion ! Among the Judges themselves it was easy to read in their faces the harrowing of their feelings. Sentence will be pronounced by men who cannot approve it in their own inmost consciences.

\* \* \*

*October 6th.*—It is over. Sentence is given. The Chamber has pronounced the penalties : the Prince to perpetual confinement in a fortress situated on the continental territory of the kingdom ; Aladenize to deportation ; Montholon, Lombard, and Persigny to five years' imprisonment ; Mésonan to fifteen years of the same punishment ; Forestier, Voisin, and Ornano to ten years ; Montauban, Bataille, Orsi, each to five years' imprisonment ; Conneau to five years' confinement, Laborde to two years.

The Prince heard his sentence with great coolness.

"Sir," he said to the clerk of the court, "once they used to say the word *impossible* was not in the French language ; nowadays they may say the same of *perpetual*."

*October 7th.*—The Fortress of Ham has been selected for the life-long confinement of the condemned Prince. His imprisonment coincides with two events which do not fail to set all minds thinking that still remain free in the inner tribunal of conscience. It is three years ago, on July 15th, that Palmerston signed with Prussia, Russia, and Austria the Treaty of London without informing M. Guizot, the French Ambassador ; it was a slap in the face for France, and the Thiers Ministry still staggers under the blow. The Parisians are beginning to grumble, and the "Marseillaise" is heard in the streets.

They say too : "The Government of July has clapped Napoleon's nephew in a cage. A good riddance." But that's not so certain sure ; cages come open sometimes. And then, in spite of everything, the Napoleonist ideas are making way ; the French, with their hot impatience, are sighing for the return of the old heroic days. The Government knows it. To calm the storm, it offers a helping hand itself to the partisans of the eagle. The



ashes of Napoleon are to be brought back to Paris. And it is Louis Philippe's son, the Prince de Joinville, who is entrusted with the task of conveying home, with England's free permission, the hallowed remains.

\* \* \*

*October 8th.*—I was right. At the very time the Prince was being taken to Ham the fat was in the fire at the Tuileries. I mean by this figure of speech to say that Louis Philippe and his Minister Thiers have made a clean sweep. Thiers, unpopular in spite of his "wall enwalling Paris,"<sup>1</sup> and the vote for the fortifications, has had to resign his portfolio. Guizot replaces him. This does not satisfy the people. They cannot swallow the English pill. They are furious at the diplomatic defeat of France; Paris will count for nothing. The Germans, those Germans, defy us. All very well for Alfred de Musset to meet Becker's *Deutsche Rhein* with his *Rhin français*; but Prussia, that we crushed at Jena and that only half recovered even after Waterloo, is lifting her head again. There is a storm brewing there. God grant it never burst. It is not the July Government, M. Thiers, M. Guizot, M. Villemain, who could allay it.

\* \* \*

*December 15th.*—The Emperor has re-entered Paris more triumphant than after the return from Elba. Two names, and two names only, are in every mouth: Austerlitz and Friedland. The cult revives!

What a superb day! The sun of Austerlitz shines again! And with a brilliance more striking as the weather is bitter cold. The crowd recks nothing of the arctic temperature; all hearts are warm; they beat in unison with the national joy. The flood rolls on towards the Invalides. Again and again Municipal Guards bar the passage of the moving populace, but are forced to give it way. Yet perfect order everywhere, and proper reverence as they await the arrival of the coffin. Cannon booms at

<sup>1</sup> "Le mur murant Paris"—in allusion to the old punning jingle of the Parisian grumbler: "Le *mur murant* Paris a rendu Paris *murmurant*."



intervals. The crowd is curious, but not impatient ; they know their hopes will not be disappointed. The Esplanade is occupied by mounted Grenadiers. They ride up at a foot's pace, solemnly. Then come the Generals and Marshals. It is a magnificent sight. They say that MM. Daguerre and Niepce, whose processes the State purchased last year, have been directed to fix the superb picture on their plates. The procession seems never-ending. I had a good place to see everything. I can see the carriage of the *Belle Poule's* chaplain—he is in mourning ; a few yards behind comes a coach draped in black velvet, in which are installed the members of the Commission of St. Helena. The drums beat a tattoo. Here is the car on which rests the Emperor's coffin ; it rolls slowly on. I ask myself if they are not going to unharness the horses to draw it in triumph. My emotion is indescribable. Generals and Marshals hold the ends of the pall. Some distance behind the car a host of flags carried by chosen legionaries from each Department. A white horse bears on his back a saddle of crimson velvet with a double border of gold lace. It is the very saddle Napoleon used at Marengo. Sixteen horses draw the car, led by grooms in the Imperial livery. This does not drive into the courtyard of the Hôtel des Invalides. Sailors advance to take the coffin into the below-ground chamber where the Emperor is to sleep his last sleep, as he had desired on his death-bed. The Prince de Joinville delivers the coffin to the King, who receives it “in the name of France.” Those are his words. I heard them. They will remain graven in my memory. France will guard faithfully, piously, these remains of the greatest of her sons. Louis Philippe himself has been constrained to salute the Napoleonic idea. One thing, however, I noticed ; many of those who owed their fortune to the Empire were not there. They had taken the oath to the King.

\* \* \*

*December 25th.*—Paris has one occupation, and one only—to visit the Invalides and see the Emperor's tomb ;

and the provinces flock to join in the demonstration of the capital.

I have heard a touching story in this connection. An old soldier of the Old Guard had never been able to accept the Restoration ; the Orléans succession pleased him no better, but he would explain how, without rallying to Louis Philippe, he wished him no ill. It was not *he* who had brought back Royalty in the foreigner's baggage-wagons. It is possible the Court, or some one attached to it, had given him custom, for the old officer of the Grand Army, who was called Lemarchand, had set up as a furniture-dealer in the Faubourg Saint-Antoine. So the Tuileries thought of Lemarchand when it was a question of bringing back the Emperor's body from St. Helena. He was commissioned to make a coffin of ebony intended to contain the inner one holding the actual ashes of the Englishmen's prisoner. He performed his task to perfection and produced a masterpiece, a veritable work of art.

In letters of gilt copper the name of Napoleon could be seen on the costly ebony.

Now Victor Hugo, who lives in the Place des Vosges, near the opening of the Faubourg Saint-Antoine, heard tell of Lemarchand's work. He wished to see it before it went to St. Helena. But hardly had his eyes fallen on the inscription before he exclaimed indignantly :

"What ! gilt copper for Napoleon I. Take it away. It must be letters of gold, solid gold !"

Next day a friend of the poet's came to ascertain if they had made the alteration, and was enabled to convince himself that this time the letters were indeed of solid gold.

Hugo is very Napoleonist, as is generally understood. For him those copper letters were a sacrilege. His criticism was acted on : the ebony coffin bears letters of gold.

## CHAPTER XIII

### THE PRISONER OF HAM

The Castle of Ham—A state prison—Companions in captivity—A cross-grained gaoler and his agreeable wife—A stormy rubber—Occupations and distractions—Thélin and the fair Parisienne—*La belle sabotière*—Origin of the nickname "Badinguet"—Correspondence: Mme Cornu—*L'Extinction du Paupérisme*—Letter from George Sand—Illness of King Louis; the Prince's fruitless efforts to obtain leave to visit his father's bedside—Thiers—Fatal accidents: the Duc d'Orléans thrown from his carriage; Dumont d'Urville killed on the new Versailles railway—"Improba cornix": M. Salvandy and Louis Philippe cap quotations.

*The Castle of Ham.*—A picturesque and romantic building, it dates from Louis XI. The Connétable de Saint-Pol, Louis of Luxembourg, who built it in the fifteenth century, gave it its gloomy aspect, which the rust of ages has heightened. Imagination, with slight help from the inspiration of history, can picture it the scene of all the incidents of feudal ages. What subjects for legend and ballad—towers, donjons, underground chambers, oubliettes even. Nothing is lacking of mediæval glamour. The fortress itself is a huge square building with a round tower at each corner. Curtain-walls connect these towers. The castle is entered by a drawbridge. The circuit of the walls encloses two barracks and the state prison; all round stretch marshy plains, the poisonous exhalations from which give poor promise of salubrity. Is this the reason it was selected as his place of confinement? I do not say so, but no doubt there will be others ready to make the supposition. There are other ways besides poison or the dagger to get rid of those we fear.

To all appearance, however, no sinister or secret



designs are entertained against the Prince. On the contrary, orders have been given to make his captivity as little rigorous as the circumstances allow.

It was at this same Castle of Ham that the Ministers of Charles X. were confined. Louis Napoléon occupies the rooms which were used by M. de Peyronnet in one of the towers on the first floor. It is a lodging of narrow dimensions, it must be admitted, but comparatively comfortable—two rooms, with a third smaller one that is to be set apart for a laboratory, for the Prince announced, on his first arrival, that he meant to occupy himself with scientific researches. In the drawing-room, which is used also as a study, a wardrobe, a large bureau, a table covered with a green cloth, an arm-chair, some straw-bottomed chairs ; on the walls several engravings. On the bookshelves a collection of fifty volumes or so. In the bedroom a bedstead of painted wood, a dressing-table of white wood, a porcelain stove. Though adequate, the rooms are, after all, very dilapidated and must be repaired. The Minister of the Interior—M. de Rémusat that is—consents to devote six hundred francs to the purpose. M. de Rémusat is the son of the erstwhile Grand Chamberlain of the Emperor. He does not forget !

The Commandant of the fortress is named Lardenois. A martinet, deeply impressed with his responsibilities, he thinks it his duty to keep a careful watch on his prisoner. Fearing the latter, in despair, may take it into his head to kill himself, he has taken his precautions, depriving him of every weapon that might serve his purpose—razors, knives, etc. The Prince told him, with a smile :

“ I belong too much to the future to try to shirk the present ”—and, undisturbed, he finished his cigarette with the utmost sang-froid.

“ Yes, he has confidence in the future. So firm is his conviction on this point that one day the Commandant, on entering his room, could read on the wall this inscription written up in charcoal by the Emperor’s nephew :

“ The Napoleonic cause is the cause of the people’s best interests ; it is European. Sooner or later it will triumph.”

He is not at all anxious, far less so, for certain, than his companions in captivity, Dr. Conneau and General Montholon, who were likewise removed to Ham after their condemnation. Thélín, the Prince's valet, also came a few months later to join them. The Commandant, Lardenois, allows them to meet sometimes; but the gate-keeper, who acts as sutler, keeps an eye on them. . . . As a matter of fact, the surveillance exercised is annoying rather than severe. It is entrusted chiefly to an old veteran, Captain Demarle, who is grumpy on principle, as it is also his interest to be. An "old soldier" in every sense of the word, he is persuaded he has to play the part of a sort of Sir Hudson Lowe, and he is delighted when he thinks he has exasperated the Prince. He reads all the letters the prisoner writes, opens all those addressed to him, claps on his spectacles to discover a word or a phrase that might betray some intrigue going on outside, and talks big when he imagines he has discovered something. All which makes the Prince laugh heartily.

"Pay no heed to him," the Captain's wife told him once when she found herself alone for a moment with Louis Napoléon. "My husband's bark is worse than his bite. Indeed he couldn't very well bite, for he has only one tooth left, and that's not a canine!"

Mme Demarle is as amiable as the Captain is grumpy. The Prince sometimes rewards her sympathy with the present of a flower he has plucked in the little garden on the rampart in which he has been given leave to walk.

What Louis Napoléon does not know is that the Captain sends every month to the Minister of the Interior a detailed report in which not a word uttered by the prisoner is forgotten.

Yet all this espionage comes to nothing. The Prince, while always very ready to talk with his friends and visitors—and he has a great many—keeps a strict watch on what he says. He early acquired the habit of keeping his inmost thoughts to himself.

Once only he betrayed himself. The Captain had invited him to go upstairs to his apartments, under pre-



tence of wishing to show him some books. Mme Demarle was there.

"You must sometimes be bored," she observed, "you have so few distractions. If you were occasionally to play a game of cards it would divert your thoughts—black ones, perhaps, at times."

"I don't play cards," said the Prince.

"Whist is soon learnt."

"I should only be a duffer at it."

"I'm not so sure. Shall we try?"

It was settled that on the morrow the Captain and his wife should go to the Prince's rooms and play whist.

Now the Captain's temper is abominable when he loses—and that is what happened. The rubber was full of incident! There was an exchange of heated words. The Prince quite forgot for the moment his position, and, but for good Mme Demarle's intervention, there would have been a fight.

Peace was happily restored when the Captain had had his revenge, and all ended well. Nevertheless, he could not refrain from writing the same evening to the Minister that his prisoner had an odious disposition.

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Visitors follow one another in a constant stream. Thanks to these visits, generously allowed by the authorities and tolerated by Captain Demarle, though often sore against his will, the prisoner's life is far from gloomy. He gardens, works in his laboratory with Mme Demarle, he sends bouquets to the ladies of Ham, who are delighted to receive them, for all are his devoted admirers; sometimes he mounts his horse and rides round the ramparts.

Other pleasures occasionally brighten his captivity. Even love finds its way into his prison. One day Th  lin, who has free leave to come and go, related how he had made an unexpected encounter. Two old ladies of the town whom he knew had a visitor, a young Parisienne, a pale, romantic creature, such as Andr   Chenier's captive or Lamartine's Elvire. She was dying of consumption, but in her eyes glittered a glowing flame of love and



longing. She confided to the valet that her habitual walk led her every day near the ramparts where the Prince was to be seen riding. The girl had been smitten with a burning passion for this unhappy Bonaparte, whom she ardently desired to meet. To her, he was a hero of legend ; she dreamed of dying for him, if need be, of climbing with a silken ladder to his window and offering him the means of escape.

Thélin undertook to contrive an interview with the prisoner. Louis Napoléon greeted her with the charm of manner, at once gallant and respectful, he knew so well how to adopt with women. He seized her hand and imprinted a kiss on it. It proved the beginning of an idyll to match that of the fair Swiss, Moësa.

It ended in a very different way from what we might have expected. So often and so long did this sentimental being converse with Thélin of the poor prisoner, and so sincerely did Thélin reciprocate her feelings of compassion, that lo ! they fell in love with each other ; mutual avowals followed, and, in a word, Crispin became his master's rival and his Elvire fell into his arms. Alas ! a few months more, and Thélin was weeping his mistress in the graveyard of Ham.

The Prince, for his part, had but a fleeting glimpse of the pretty Parisienne, and she left no mark behind in his memory. Moreover another woman, the fair *sabotière*, appears to console him. She is called Alexandrine Vergeot. Her father makes sabots, and she goes out to work by the day. A poor confrère of her father's, another sabot-maker, courts her ; but, as she saw his intentions were not honourable, she silenced the beatings of her fond heart. But it was a very loving heart, and only waited opportunity to be fired again. When she heard that her lover had transferred his affections to another she grieved sadly, thinking she was too poor a girl to hope for a husband. The gatekeeper's wife at the Castle, the same who kept the canteen, Mme Renard, engages her to do cleaning about the prison, employing her also to carry up the prisoner's meals. The Prince found her to his taste, and she made no resistance, but returned him

love for love. It is a case of genuine mutual affection. She is not pretty, but her blue eyes and fresh complexion are fascinating. This time the idyll is crossed by no disappointment. Two children, both boys, Eugène and Louis, are the result of the daily visits of the sabot-maker's daughter to Louis Napoléon's chamber.<sup>1</sup>

Alexandrine was not the only conquest the Prince made when a prisoner. He also won the favours of a certain Demoiselle Badinguet.<sup>2</sup>

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Louis Napoléon is very active as a correspondent. He writes to the two Barrots, to Chateaubriand, to Soult, to Lamartine, to Béranger, to Mme Cornu, his foster-sister, to M. Vieillard, his old tutor, to George Sand. All his letters are full of faith in his star. Moreover, they describe the Prince's life at this period of his captivity. He is busy with military questions, artillery, history, social problems; his correspondence reflects his activity of mind.

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Mme Cornu receives his most intimate confidences. She sends him regularly the books he requires for his studies and affords him affectionate encouragement in the pursuit of his literary tasks.

His mind never rests. He collaborates actively in the journals of Saint-Quentin and is publishing in their columns some contributions that attract a great deal of notice. His ideas on the extinction of pauperism have secured him this nobly eloquent letter from George Sand:

"Prince,—I have to thank you for the flattering

<sup>1</sup> These children were brought up by the Prince's nurse. Subsequently, under the Empire, Alexandrine Vergeot married Napoleon III.'s foster-brother. She died in poverty in Paris in 1886.

<sup>2</sup> Have we here the origin of the nickname that was so commonly applied to him during the later years of the Empire? It would be rash to say so positively; others conjecture the name was given the Prince by the good people of Ham, who thus described him by a slang word of the locality, referring to his constant comings and goings on the ramparts.—Baron d'Ambès.



token of your remembrance with which you have honoured me in sending me, with a word from your own hand that is precious to me, the noble and noteworthy work on the extinction of pauperism. It is with heartfelt sincerity I express to you the serious interest with which I have studied your scheme. I have been particularly struck by the just appreciation of our misfortunes and the generous desire to discover their remedy. . . . Yours is now another glory than that of the sword, another ascendancy than that of physical force ; you know this now, now that the calm of ill fortune has restored you all your good sense and all your native greatness of heart, and you aspire, they tell me, to be a French citizen and nothing more. It is a noble part to play, an adequate part for any man who can rightly understand it. . . . There is your new glory, there will lie your true greatness. The terrible name you bear would not have sufficed alone to subjugate us. We have both dwindled and grown greater since the days of sublime intoxication he once gave us. His illustrious reign is no longer of this world, and the heir of his name sits pondering, studious and full of pity, over the lot of the proletariat ! Yes, there is your glory ! It is a healthy sustenance that will not corrupt the fine ingenuousness and noble rectitude of your soul, as, it may be, the exercise of power would have done in spite of yourself. There would be the bond of affection between you and the Republican spirits which France counts by thousands to-day. For myself, I know no suspicion ; and, if it rested with me, after reading your book I should have faith in your promises and would open the prison bars to release you, and extend my hand to welcome you. But, alas ! indulge no false hopes ! They are all anxious and depressed about me, they who aspire to better days. You will make them yours only by dint of ideas, of democratic sentiment, of the doctrine of equality. You enjoy an irksome leisure, but you know how to turn it to profit. Speak to us, then, of deliverance and release, noble captive. The people, like you, is in fetters. The Napoleon of to-day is he who personifies the sorrows of



the people, even as the other personified its glories. Accept, Prince, the expression of my heartfelt respect.

“GEORGE SAND.”

This work of the Prince's on the Extinction of Pauperism is a veritable manifesto. It is being read with avidity. For myself, I cannot tear myself from it; it is “a book to take to bed with one.” If ever the Prince comes to power—and I desire it with all my soul—and if he can put his ideas into execution, we should indeed enter on the golden age. I will not analyse the Prince's argument. Why should I? The *Extinction of Pauperism* is in everybody's hands and in everybody's memory.

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The Prince is happy to find himself holding the same high aspirations as an exceptionally gifted mind like the author of *Indiana*. Mme Cornu, who writes to me occasionally, tells me he is now contemplating a noble project—to write the life of Charlemagne.

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*December 1842.*—How many famous men dead this year, and some of them cut off so tragically!

The Duc d'Orléans, in the highest spirits, set out after breakfast to drive to Neuilly. At the rond-point of the Champs Élysées he notices his horses are harnessed too short, losing their tempers, and inclined to bolt. He tries to gentle them, but without success. At the Porte-Maillot a shock and a sudden loud noise increase their panic. The Duke loses control. At the Porte de la Révolte he is pitched in the dust with a broken shoulder, and shortly after his Royal Highness succumbs to his injuries.

Dumont d'Urville has twice sailed round the world, and for thirty-six years affronted all the perils of the sea and expeditions into remote regions. He takes the train between Paris and Versailles. Suddenly the axle of one of the two locomotives snaps, the second engine crashes into the first, carrying with it four carriages, which catch

fire. Like those horrible baskets of wicker-work in which the Syrians used to sacrifice human beings to their gods, the heaped-up debris makes *iron cages*, imprisoning the passengers inside, where they are burnt alive amid their cries of despair and the useless vociferations of the people who have hurried up. There are a hundred and fifty victims, whose frenzied faces and mouths gaping in horror are visible to the spectators. A mother holds a child ; they throw her a rope, but she will not leave the burning fiery furnace alone. A young girl cries in vain for help, sobbing, with broken limbs, beseeching them to save her from the fire that creeps nearer and nearer, licks her with its fierce breath, consumes her in its awful caress ! . . . There are a hundred and seventy-five injured. An old man of eighty came out safe and sound from the accident. Dumont d'Urville lost his life, his wife and son with him. He was only fifty-one.

Other great names that have vanished from among us this year : Jouffroy, the distinguished philosopher, who used to say, extolling the inner life : " I shut my eyes, the better to see " ; Du Sommerard, who founded the Musée Cluny ; Mme Vigée-Lebrun, the painter, an honour at once to her art and her sex with her exquisite talent ; Cherubini, the musician ; Duval, the dramatic author ; Mme Vestris, the dancer. What a hecatomb !

There are years like that. A storm-wind blows and beats down the topmost ears of the human harvest. Other times, its devastation strikes lower, at the vulgar herd. And a shudder strikes us : when is our turn to come ?

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I have been told of an incident that happened on May 1st. The fête was less whole-hearted than in previous years—artificial enthusiasm, punctuated by a few cheers under the Tuileries windows, paid for at so much an hour. During the *aubade*, given by the National Guard to the Princes of the Royal family, who stood at the windows of the Palace, an old raven was noticed fluttering over the heads of the Orléans Princes and flapping its wings. Salvandy, who knows his classics,



drew the King's attention to the bird of ill omen, quoting his Virgil :

"*Cornix plena . . . vocat improba voce.*"

And the King, who knows his *Georgics* as well as anybody, immediately capped the quotation :

"*Pluviam vocat*—it only portends rain ;

"*Sol tibi signa dabit. Solem quis dicere falsum  
Audeat ?*"

The papers have had their say on this exchange of erudition, but they add that the raven may very well have augured something worse than a shower. Undoubtedly there is tempest in the sky. . . . One day the storm will burst.

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*Undated.*—Lord Londonderry, who is aware of my intimacy with the Prince, has just written me a heart-breaking letter. A member of the English House of Peers, in confidential relations with all the most influential politicians in France, he had hoped his direct appeal to the French Government in favour of the prisoner of Ham would be crowned with success. He met nothing but refusals everywhere ! The fact is, everybody is afraid to manifest any open interest in Louis Napoléon. Many had promised *sub rosa* they would gladly give their support to bring about his release ; but the dread of compromising themselves carries the day in every case.

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*Undated.*—Orsi is out of prison, having served his sentence. The first thing he did was to hasten to London, where the Prince has still many friends. He has conceived a plan to substitute escape for release ; but money is indispensable for such a project, for there will be mouths to shut and eyes to bandage. Where to find the needful sum ? The Prince himself can do nothing ; the Boulogne affair has cost him all that was left of his inheritance.

Everywhere Orsi has met with only objections and excuses. In London the Prince's former friends are



displeased with his attitude. They object to his writing his *Extinction of Poverty* especially. It is pure Socialism, they say, or worse. One individual, a member of the House of Lords, even went so far as to declare that, if they collected money, it ought to be to strengthen the bolts and bars at Ham. Orsi is discouraged. But meantime a bright idea crossed his brain. The Duke of Brunswick, Charles d'Este, expelled by his rebellious subjects in 1830, has taken refuge in London, after residing some time in Paris. He is enormously rich; his fortune amounts to more than sixty millions of francs. His vicissitudes of fortune have been like the Prince's. He was very intimate with Louis Napoléon when the latter was in England. Indeed, for a while he showed himself full of sympathy for the nephew of Napoleon I.; but it was the man, not the cause, he was interested in. In fact, this dethroned Sovereign is proud of his Republicanism. He subsidizes the *National*. He clasps hands with Cavaignac and Marrast. A monarch himself, he detests the monarchical principle. He would like to see all the thrones crumble to dust, now his own is overthrown. A grotesque figure—quite a character out of Hoffmann. Orsi went straight to the mark. He asked him, point-blank, for a hundred and fifty thousand francs.

“What for?” ejaculated the Duke.

“To get the Prince out of prison.”

“He is in now; let him stay there!”

“He would be better outside.”

“Better for him, perhaps; but for the Republican cause, no!”

“Yet no one has expressed more ardently his Republican convictions.”

“It may be so, but I for my part recognize the Republic only as the adversary of Royalty.” Then, after thinking a while: “Your Prince requires a hundred thousand francs?”

“A pin-prick for you, Highness.”

“Very well, he shall have them; but hear my conditions: the Prince must sign me an acknowledgment

binding him to pay the interest; moreover, twenty thousand francs will be subtracted from the loan to be employed in purchasing shares in the *National*; further, the Prince will undertake, in so many words, to help me to recover my throne of Brunswick if ever he becomes Head of the State in France, just as I will second him to regain the throne of France. My secretary will sign the agreement, you will do the same, and, these formalities completed, my bankers will pay over the sum."

Orsi was only too ready to agree, and came over to see the Prince at Ham. Louis Napoléon signed whatever they wished, and Barings' Bank put the hundred and fifty thousand francs at Orsi's disposal. So now we hold the sinews of war in our hands. We have only to wait and hope, as Dumas's *Monte Cristo* has it, the last chapter of which I have just read—Dantès' escape from the Château d'If, thanks to the Abbé Faria's money. Why should not the Prince, with Brunswick's hundred and fifty thousand francs, escape from Ham?

## CHAPTER XIV

### ESCAPE ; IN LONDON AGAIN

Smith's account of the Escape—The Prince's own version—Conneau's ingenious subterfuge—The Prince in London: Brunswick Hotel, Jermyn Street—Letter to M. de Saint-Aulaire—Death of King Louis—The Prince inherits—Resources and habits of expenditure—Occupations: study and the turf—Goes much into society; rides in Rotten Row—Suggested alliances: Miss Seymour, Miss Emily Bowles, Miss Burdett-Coutts—Miss Howard—Letter from Arese: Metternich and Austria—France at heart Bonapartist.

*May 27th, 1846.*—I am awakened by a knock at my door. I spring out of bed and hurry to admit my visitor. Two hands grasp mine. It is Smith, Secretary to Mr. Duncombe, a Member of the English Parliament. I have known Smith intimately in London. He is devoted to the Prince. It was he who went to Ham with Orsi to negotiate the arrangements with the Duke of Brunswick. Smith, albeit an Englishman, is as excitable as a Méridional. He throws himself into my arms, kisses me, and, with tears in his eyes:

“Free!” he cries; “free at last!”

I do not understand him. What does he mean, whom is he talking about? But I can see by his face that something extraordinary has happened. He does not give me time to think.

“The Prince is in London,” he goes on.

And on my making a gesture of amazement and incredulity,

“Yes, in London; safe, free, escaped!”

I drag the man into my room, make him sit down, and beg him to tell me everything. Then, in a voice that is still breathless:



"The Prince had prepared his plan without letting a soul know, without any one having an inkling. In the letters he wrote to various correspondents, even in his confidences to Mme Cornu, he never said a word of his real purpose. He was determined to checkmate babbling tongues. Yes, I know he said, 'I shall never leave Ham but to go to my grave,' but he added, 'or to the Tuileries.' *Now* the road to the Tuileries lies open. Only he has chosen to go there viâ London, it is the surer way. He has no wish to repeat either Strassburg or Boulogne. He is confident Paris will not be long in calling upon him to come."

"Go on," I interrupted him impatiently.

"You know the Prince, my dear Baron, how strong-willed he is, how tenacious of purpose. His maxim is that everything happens exactly as we foresee, if we foresee wisely, and he has an extraordinarily keen vision for future possibilities."

"I have had many occasions to observe the fact. And then, what then? . . ."

"I will tell you. He had hoped his efforts to obtain a provisional *exeat* would be successful. He was eager to see his father, to breathe a purer air than that of a prison. If Duchâtel, Barrot, Thiers, and the rest had not refused to listen, if he had been given his liberty provisionally, he would have returned to Ham—he has never broken his word of honour; but they were inexorable, the doors were to be kept tightly shut. Then he told himself there was only one way—he must open them himself. And the thing is done."

"You know all the details; I burn to hear them."

"Some days ago, after seeing Orsi, with whom I went to Ham, the Prince had a conversation with Dr. Conneau. The question of a possible escape was discussed. Conneau was against any such attempt; he considered success out of the question. All eyes were open, the surveillance of the strictest, the argus-eyed watchers, Captain Demarle first and foremost, incessantly on the alert. The Prince laughed at his objections. He had his plan clearly formulated. The trusty Thêlin was the only one who



CHÂTEAU DE HAM, 1835.





knew it. A visit paid him by Robert Peel and an English lady came in opportunely to facilitate his preparations. The Prince told them he wanted to send his valet de chambre to Belgium, but that Th  lin could not cross the Belgian frontier without a passport, which the French authorities would not give him. The English lady offered him the use of one belonging to a servant of her own, who bore some resemblance to the Prince's valet. In this way Th  lin was able to procure the articles needed for the prisoner's disguise, which the man bought as if for his own personal use—a Picardy peasant's outfit, shirt of coarse stuff, a pair of working trousers, a workman's blouse, necktie, and apron. These several articles were smuggled into the prison, I am not very clear how ; I have been told the shoemaker's wife packed them in her basket under the provisions, but I cannot say for certain.

“Anyhow, at the first gleam of daylight the Prince rose, firmly resolved to let no opportunity slip. One offered as if by a miracle. The Prince's apartments were under repair—sundry painting and building operations. Th  lin waited for the workmen's arrival, and invited them to drink a glass with him, detaining them in the dining-room on the ground-floor for the purpose. Meantime the Prince was dressing in all haste, shaving off his moustaches, slipping on the clothes provided, trousers and blouse, the latter smudged with plaster, putting on a black wig with long straggling hair and a cap, which he pulled down well over his eyes. Heavy sabots stuffed with straw increased his apparent height ; he tied a workman's apron round his waist, smeared his face with grease, clapped a cutty-pipe between his teeth and hoisted a plank taken from the library over his shoulder. In case of accidents, he carried a dagger concealed in his pocket. So complete was the disguise that, when he walked past Th  lin and the workmen with whom he was in conversation, the former was the only person to notice anything out of the common. Indeed the plank, being tilted forward, entirely hid the Prince's face.

“An accident very nearly let the cat out of the bag.

A slip made him drop his pipe, which fell on the floor and broke. Without losing his presence of mind he halted, stopped unconcernedly to pick up the pieces, and stood gazing at them a moment or two with a look of vexation. Then he stepped out again for the door of exit, where a sentry stood on guard. The man looked suspiciously at the supposed workman. 'Where are you going? . . .' The Prince, deepening his voice, answered roughly: 'You can see for yourself, I'm going out'—and the sentinel let him pass. Farther on he encountered the sentry of the main gate—same procedure. On the draw-bridge, where the sentry of the outworks stood talking to the contractors for the repairs, he knocked against the former clumsily with his plank. 'Mind what you're about, can't you?' No answer. The Prince walked on, getting nearer and nearer to the outermost gate of the prison, Thélin following some way behind.

"When they were both outside, the valet de chambre, without exchanging a word with his master, hurried off to a carriage-proprietor's who had been communicated with the day before. In the meantime the Prince was plodding along steadily and unconcernedly, keeping to the high road. In this way he covered something like a couple of kilometres, bending under the weight of his plank. The passers-by, taking him for a workman employed at the fortress, a mason on the repairing job in hand, gave him good-day as he jogged past them; he only nodded in acknowledgment without speaking. On approaching the cemetery, he dropped his plank into a ditch and sat down by the roadside. Before long Thélin made his appearance with the carriage—a cabriolet. The two took their seats, and shared a meat-pie which the valet had brought with him.

"They set off at a gallop for Saint-Quentin. On the way the Prince rid himself of part of his disguise. In this trim they reached the town, where Thélin got out, leaving the Prince, who was driving, to follow the Valenciennes road alone.

"Thélin's business was to procure another vehicle. The Prince had a weary wait, the valet seemed never to



be coming back. At any moment Louis Napoléon might be taken unawares. But fortune favoured him—so much so that a passing stranger whom he stopped and questioned, and who was no other than the Procureur du Roi, never suspected his identity. At last Thélín reappeared. Together they pursued their way to Valenciennes and reached the railway station, where they proposed to take the train for Brussels ; but it was long behind time, and an anxious wait followed, that seemed endless. Suddenly a voice accosts Thélín. It was a former gendarme at Ham, now an employé of the railway. There was no avoiding the conversation. The ex-gendarme had more than once seen the prisoner ; but, without his moustache, he failed to recognize him. At last the whistle of the approaching train put an end to their suspense. Thélín had taken tickets for Brussels. They selected an empty compartment, and in a few hours more they were in Belgium. From Brussels, after a brief halt, they went on at once to Ostend, where they caught the boat for London."

"And at Ham," I asked, "what was happening all this time at Ham ? They must surely have discovered the escape immediately and set the whole garrison at work to overtake the fugitive.

"No ; luckily, it was not so," replied Smith, with a smile. "Fortune favours the brave." Thélín had given the word to Conneau, and the Doctor had arranged a comic interlude the most ingenious romance-writer need not have been ashamed to father. Directly the Prince was out of his rooms, he and his plank, Conneau had hurriedly slipped into the empty bed a bundle of clothes artfully made up to represent a man asleep. This done, he had shut the door of communication between the bedroom and salon. In this outer room he had set out on the table an array of medicine-bottles, glasses, and such-like things to suggest that the Prince had been under the doctor's hands.

"Presently Captain Demarle appeared. 'Don't go in,' said the Doctor ; 'the Prince is not well. I have just given him a purgative. Look, here's some still left in



the bottle. . . .' Conneau had swallowed half the contents himself. The Captain did not insist, but he came back again towards midday. Conneau continued the same game, announcing that his patient was still far from well. Demarle asked where the valet de chambre was, as he did not see him. 'Gone out, I have no doubt, to make some purchase or other. . . .' The Captain did not smell a rat even now, but he said he would wait in the salon till the Prince awoke.

"After a while he declared he could hear him stirring, and insisted on entering the bedroom. 'Very good,' said Conneau at last, reckoning that the fugitive must be far enough by this time, perhaps actually over the frontier. Then the Captain, his patience exhausted, marched up to the bed, gave a shrug of suspicion, lifted the coverlet, fathomed the trick in an instant, and, turning on Conneau : 'You have deceived me, successfully. Well, you have played *your* part ; I know how to play *mine* !' He hurried out, summoned the warder, told him not to let the Doctor out of his sight and to shut the prison doors, gave the sentries special orders, warned the gendarmes, and sent expresses to Paris and to all the towns in the neighbourhood of Ham. Then he went back to his wife and told her the whole story, which she greeted with tokens of the liveliest surprise, not unmingled with satisfaction, for she had an affection for the Prince, and was grieved to see him a prisoner ; she has told me so herself more than once."

"And Conneau, what has become of him ?"

"Doubtless he will pay for his devotion with a few months in prison."

\* \* \*

*Undated.*—I have just come across again, in an old newspaper, the narrative which Dr. Conneau himself published of Louis Napoléon's escape. It differs in some respects from the account Smith gave me, and, in particular, gives further details of what occurred after the Prince's departure. We therefore reproduce this latter part of the extract :

"When the Prince was gone I took all possible means

to ensure the fact not being discovered until after as long an interval as possible. At nine o'clock the Commandant sent to ask if the Prince could receive him ; I said ' No, the Prince is not well.' Then, fearing the Commandant might come back later, I went down to see him, and informed him the Prince had taken a dose of medicine. Later on I sent a servant, named Delaplace, to get me some castor-oil.

"About midday, or one o'clock, the Commandant appeared once more. I told him the Prince was resting ; he offered me his own servant in Th  lin's absence, and I thanked him for his courtesy. When the room was set in order, Delaplace left it by the door of the closet giving on the corridor ; I had shut the one opening directly from the inside of the room. It was then that, in hopes of deceiving the Commandant till the following morning, I made a lay figure with a cloak I found in the Prince's dressing-closet and shaped a head, which I crowned with a handkerchief he always wore in bed. But this precaution had hardly the result I expected.

"When the Commandant came back for the third time, about seven in the evening, he was a good deal excited ; he said to me :

" ' We have not seen the Prince all day long. If he is ill, write your report ; I am going in to see him.' "

"I went into the bedroom, stepped up to the bed, and came back, telling the Commandant :

" ' The Prince is asleep ; he did not answer me.' "

"The Commandant, seated in the salon, kept still staring at the bed. He said :

" ' What ! isn't Th  lin come back ? Yet all the diligences from Saint-Quentin have arrived ! ' "

" ' He has taken a cabriolet,' I told him.

"The Commandant seemed to grow more and more anxious. A tattoo was heard.

" ' That will waken the Prince,' the Commandant then observed ; ' I think he turned in his bed.' "

"He went up close to the lay figure and whispered to me :

" ' I don't seem to hear him breathing.' "



"I put a finger to my lips, as much as to say :

" 'Do let him sleep.'

"The Commandant, losing all patience, then laid his hand on the bedclothes ; he discovered there was nothing there but a dummy.

" 'Gone !'

" 'Yes, gone this morning at seven o'clock !' "

\* \* \*

The Prince has been in London since Wednesday, the 27th. He is staying at the Hotel Brunswick, in Jermyn Street. He calls himself the Comte d'Arenaberg. He has written to the French Ambassador, M. de Saint-Aulaire, a friend of Queen Hortense's, that, in escaping from Ham, he had been tempted by no project of repeating those attempts against the French Government which had hitherto proved so disastrous. "My sole and only idea," he declared, "was to see my old father once again. Before resolving on the extreme measure of escaping, I exhausted every means to win permission to go to Florence, offering every possible guarantee compatible with my honour. My efforts were in vain, all my prayers rejected, so I did what the Ducs de Guise and de Nemours did in the reign of Henri IV. under similar circumstances. I beg you, sir, to inform the French Government of my peaceful intentions, which are purely spontaneous, and I trust this declaration may serve to shorten the captivity of my friends who are in prison."

\* \* \*

*London, July 24th, 1846.*—The Prince is a mourner. This morning he received me and I heard from his lips the sad news of King Louis's death. I found him deeply moved.

"I should have wished," he told me, "to be able to close his eyes and gather his last sigh. Politics and diplomacy have denied me this consolation. The Austrian Ambassador entrusted with Tuscan affairs in London has informed me in so many words that I was, in the eyes of the Powers, no better than a suspicious character and that I must only expect to be treated as such. I appealed



to the Grand-Duke Leopold himself. He had me told, in reply, that under no circumstances should I be allowed to pass four-and-twenty hours at Florence. My father is dead ; he called me in vain to his bedside."

I expressed my condolences. The Prince and his father, I am bound to admit, were not genuinely attached to each other. I have said why on a previous page. There never existed between them the same tie as between Louis Napoléon and Queen Hortense. I am convinced that, had the filial feeling been the same in this case, the Prince would have braved all obstacles of distance and broken down all barriers of prohibition. There had been, as I remember but too well, much coldness between father and son. The latter had reason to doubt even if the King really cared for him at all. Nevertheless, at the supreme moment, the Comte de Saint-Leu had experienced a sudden return of affection for the only one of his children remaining to him.

He leaves the Prince everything he possessed—his palace at Florence, his estate of Civita Nuova, his whole fortune, barring a few legacies, his decorations, his heirlooms, whatever he had preserved in the way of relics of the Emperor.

By his father's death and King Louis's will, the Prince had the disposal of personal resources of very considerable amount. He has lying at Barings' to his credit over a hundred and fifty thousand francs, at Farquhart's more than three millions. But friends are for ever tapping the chest, and partisans do the same. Begging letters come from everywhere, not only from France, but from Switzerland and Portugal. The Prince has an open hand. Readily enough he calls himself a poor man, but it is merely one of those current phrases employed to keep importunate people off. The truth is, he spends a great deal. Moreover, he owns several houses. I will only mention the one he has bought in Berkeley Street, a side-street off Piccadilly, for Miss Howard.

\* \* \*

The Prince divides his time between study and the

turf. He is a member of several clubs, among others the Army and Navy. I cannot help blaming him for surrounding himself with a crew of parasites speculating on his future. I am very much afraid he will come to regret his amiability to a set of sharpers. I have warned him, more than once, of the consequences these shady connections may involve him in. But he loves to hear himself called a staunch friend, a friend in need, and they easily cajole him with such-like maudlin speeches; it is a weakness he will never conquer. Not that he likes flattery, but a certain naive trustfulness forms one side of his character, and this encourages the hopes of needy adventurers. It grieves me to see him diving in his purse to fill itching palms, and even going so far as to run into debt to oblige others. He borrows money for no other reason but to benefit the almsmen of his bounty. The Marquis Pallavicini has advanced him as much as 325,000 francs on mortgage on the estate of Civita Nuova.

\* \* \*

The Prince frequents the most refined society. His tailor dresses him fashionably. He prefers dark colours and coats fitting close to the figure. He is a great horseman, usually riding in Rotten Row, where the gentlemen and ladies of the aristocracy take their exercise.

\* \* \*

Smith said to me the other day :

"I cannot think why the Prince does not marry. He could make a very excellent match if he chose." Then he mentioned several names—Miss Seymour, who will be the very wealthy heiress of one of the great property owners of London; Miss Emily Bowles, whose father owns the fine estate of Camden House at Chislehurst; last, but not least, Miss Burdett-Coutts, who has already refused Wellington.

And Smith added, under his breath :

"If the Prince does not marry, it's because of Miss Howard."

\* \* \*



When did the Prince first see this enchantress, Miss Howard ? Perhaps at Lady Blessington's, at Gore House, before the Boulogne affair. She is remarkably handsome, and, they say, highly intelligent. Above all, she is a passionate admirer of the Prince. He has had opportunities of convincing himself of her devotion. When he embarked on board the *Edinburgh Castle* she accompanied him on to the ship's deck, embraced him tenderly, and wished him success. She holds a *salon*, where she receives the Chesterfields, the Malmesburys ; the Count d'Orsay is another regular visitor. I have also learned that the historian Kinglake is struck with her beauty, whence a rivalry between the Prince and him. There has even been an interchange of sharp speeches because of her. Kinglake bears malice ; he is a "good hater," and keeps a sharp knife whetted for the Prince. Why does she call herself Miss Howard ? Spiteful tongues declare—Smith says so—that she was formerly the mistress of a celebrated gentleman-rider of that name, who left her a fortune. Then she had a second liaison with a Major in the Guards. Now she cares for nobody but the Prince. She has faith in his star. Perhaps, like the Russian Grand-Duchess, she has dreams of a throne. This much is certain : she lays at the Prince's feet her heart and her strong box.

\* \* \*

1846.—Long letter from Arese, full of interesting matter. He says, amongst other things : Metternich, reputed so artful a diplomatist, is as blind as a bat. Having studied the French Revolution, he has told himself : the Revolution has been the ruin of France and of the power of kings ; then let us be uncompromisingly anti-revolutionary ; let us stifle every suspicion of revolt ; let us imprison everybody suspected of Liberalism ; let us multiply our police ; let us govern by fear. Having studied the Empire, he has told himself : the Empire was an admirable system, a system of centralizing, of levelling ; let us copy the Imperial rule ; let us hold with a hand of iron the reins of the nationalities



that make up Austria ; and we shall continue to be masters. . . . A fallacy ! Austria is not France. She is an aggregate very ill cemented by authority. She can only hope for peace by kindly dealings with all these diverse peoples. Before Metternich, others, wiser men than he, had realized this and showed themselves mild and conciliatory. Metternich has chosen to introduce tyranny, to centralize the threads of government at Vienna, to Germanize, to oppress. His system is on the eve of bankruptcy. Italy, more than any other country, is all nerves ; she paws and prances like a filly whose mouth is torn with a cruel bit. She kicks ; she is going to bolt !

\* \* \*

*Inserted.*—No one will ever persuade me that France is not at bottom Napoleonist. The decision reached by the July Government to bring back to Paris the exile of St. Helena and give him, in the very heart of the capital, a tomb before which the whole nation should crowd to demonstrate its respect—was not this a proof that in the inmost core of every heart stands firmly anchored a fond attachment to the Imperial cause ? Yet another guarantee for the faith that is in me is afforded by the actual words of the speech pronounced by the Minister of the Interior, M. de Rémusat, at the remarkable sitting of the Chamber of Deputies at which the question was debated and the restoration of Napoleon's ashes to his country approved by vote. M. de Rémusat's were words of gold. But is it not strange, all the same, when they were glorifying the memories of which every Frenchman is proud, when they were thus rallying officially to the Empire, to see this same Government, so Napoleonistic in sentiment, holding prisoner the heir of the Emperor ?

## CHAPTER XV

### REVOLUTION OF '48

Louis Philippe compared to the pilot Athamas—First day of the *Émeutes*; the "Marseillaise"—Horace Vernet and the gold-dust—"Warming to the work"—Second day: "À bas Louis Philippe!"—Third day: Place Vendôme, "Vive l'Empereur!"—Guizot disappears; Thiers and Girardin advise abdication—The mob sacks the Tuileries—Tragedy and comedy—Lamartine and a Provisional Government—The Republic proclaimed—The red flag—The Prince visits Paris incognito—The "Napoléonides"—National workshops closed—The June insurrection—Barricades and bloodshed—Assassination of General Bréa; General Négrier and Archbishop Affre killed—Lamartine "always in the clouds"—Louis Philippe and Guizot in London—Count d'Orsay and Lady Blessington: financial straits—Louis Napoléon elected Deputy by five Departments; speech on taking his seat in the Assembly—"The Man of the Hour"; "The Man of To-morrow"—Caricatures—Constitution of 1848.

*January 16th, 1848.*—Louis Philippe is singularly short-sighted. He strikes me as being like the pilot Athamas in *Télémaque*. The horizon is outside his ken. He persists in wearing blinkers. I do not deny his adroitness, his knowledge even, but it is a barren knowledge; he hears only the echoes of the drawing-room and the bank. He shuts his eyes and ears against the movements of the country. It is a fault the country will not forgive him.

\* \* \*

*February 22nd.*—It was raining this morning. I left the house to find a crowd of people making for the Place du Panthéon. I followed the stream—students and workmen. They were singing the "Marseillaise," gestures marking the excited state of their feelings, the singing

breaking off from time to time to let them shout "Reform! reform!" I let myself be carried along. We reached the Place de la Concorde, and from there the Palais-Bourbon. Not a sign of police; nobody barred the advance of the column. It appears the Commissaries had had orders to act with moderation. I am told that the King, on being informed of the demonstration in the middle of conversation with Horace Vernet, merely took the sheet of paper on which he had just traced a few words and powdered the writing with gold-dust, and, turning to the painter, simply remarked:

"When I blow on it, it will all disperse."

Meantime the column is advancing. Soon it is mounting the Rue Royale towards the Madeleine, and halts before the Ministry of Marine, where the Municipal Guard is on guard at the gates. They hiss the troops and begin to tear up the paving-stones. They want to show their loathing and contempt for Guizot, while in the tribune that statesman is scornfully replying to the accusations of his adversaries. Outside the Chamber, meanwhile, the crowd thickens. I hear they are raising barricades in the streets in the Saint-Eustache neighbourhood. I am also assured they are distributing arms. I am even given the names of those entrusted with this task: Caussidière, Sobrier, Albert, Delahodde, Chenu.

It looks as if we were going to see a repetition of the days of 1830. At the Prefecture of Police never was profounder calm. Some one assures me the Préfet, Delessert, is serene and smiling.

\* \* \*

*February 23rd.*—A neighbour has just been in as I was on the point of getting out of bed.

"They're warming to the work," he announced.

I am eager to go and see, and we are soon in the street. No doubt about it: it is a revolution. The storm threatens from the quarters of the Rue Montmartre and the Temple, and we make our way in that direction. Before long we can hear the crackling



of musketry in the Filles-du-Calvaire neighbourhood. Cannon thunders ; the streets are torn up ; every here and there barricades. We meet thousands of demonstrators, some in bourgeois habiliments, others wearing the workman's blouse, all marching on the Chamber.

On the road we pick up what news we can. They say the King does not know what course to adopt, and Guizot can suggest nothing. Some one goes by in full view. A gentleman in white gloves, top boots and spurs, riding-whip in hand. Whither away ? To the Jockey Club ? No, to the Chamber, like ourselves. He recognized me and waved a hand ; it was Morny !

I go into a café and ask for the papers, those just come from the press. They talk of a change of Ministry as likely to allay the effervescence. Into the streets again, where band follows band. They are singing "Mourir pour la patrie !" A man of tall stature, in a yellow great-coat, with black hair and very strongly marked features, has taken the head of the column.

I saw a red flag floating over the demonstrators' heads. On the pavement a crowd stands ranked to watch the sight. A great shouting, but otherwise no disturbance. If no untoward incident occur, all will yet be arranged. The King will yield the country's demands. A new Ministry will decree the long-expected reforms.

*Same date.*—The irreparable has happened ; the game is up. In revolutions there is always an unsuspected force that turns the scale, a force acting of its own impulse, at its own hour. It was a quarter past ten. A party of demonstrators was making for the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Guizot's residence. A detachment of the 14th of the line barred the way. An officer of the National Guard urges the troops to disregard orders. He is told politely that it is impossible to accede to his demands. The orders are explicit. Lieutenant-Colonel Couraud declares he is bound to carry them out. A leader of the crowd insults him, shouting that the people has a right to pass. The man carries a torch, which he thrust in the officer's face, threatening jestingly to singe

his moustaches. A Sergeant of grenadiers throws himself in front of the Colonel and levels his musket at the ruffian. A Captain signs to him not to fire, but the leader shows more and more flagrant insolence, encouraged by the mob, which keeps shouting in chorus: "Pass this way! can't pass this way!" The man with the torch, which he brandishes furiously, rushes again at the Lieutenant-Colonel, who stands unmoved, merely giving the word, "Point bayonets." A shot rings out. It is the Corsican Sergeant, who thinks he has received the order to shoot. The leader drops. The other soldiers fire. Fifty or more wounded strew the ground, the rest of the demonstrators bolt. A wagon happened to be there. The insurgents load it up with sixteen corpses. The cart is driven from one end of Paris to the other, the wagoner holding the reins. A trail of blood stains the highway. Two men have placed themselves in the cart. One brandishes a lighted torch, the other holds in his arms a woman's dead body, which he shows to the populace, demanding vengeance. The wagon passes the publishing offices of the *National*, and one of the editors tries in vain to persuade the people to moderation. But a raging torrent cannot be dammed with words. The cry is no longer "*Reform!*" but "*Down with Louis Philippe!*"

\* \* \*

*February 24th.*—Round the column in the Place Vendôme shouts were raised of "*Vive l'Empereur!*" The drums beat a tattoo, the National Guard presented arms. All heads were bared. "*Long live the Emperor!*" The soul of the people is stirred at the cry that expresses its hopes. I know now what to-morrow will bring forth.

\* \* \*

*Same date.*—Guizot has disappeared. Nobody knows where he is gone. Some will have it he has taken asylum at a mistress's, where he disguised himself as a woman so as to escape from Paris.



It is currently reported that the King wished to mount his horse and ride to the barricades, surrounded by his sons and some of his Generals. Thiers persuaded him not to. "All is over, Sire," was his word. The little man can see nothing but troubled waters, and is preparing to cast his line in them. At the Tuileries Louis Philippe is surrounded by none but pusillanimous, ineffectual cowards. He can hear the shouts of "Vive l'Empereur!" from without. It is Marshal Gérard they are cheering as he enters the Palace.

Girardin is as busy as a bee, coming and going, seeking a solution. He even suggests one by anticipation: "Abdicate, Sire," is his advice. Marie Amélie alone protests and gives advice consistent with the Royal dignity: "To defend the throne to the last, to await the people and bring them back to reason." All are asking what the catastrophe of the drama will be; many foresee the end. Girardin appears again and repeats his old song: "Abdicate, abdicate, Sire!" The rattle of musketry outside announces that the fatal hour has struck. Crémieux presents a sheet of paper. Montpensier slips it in front of his father and offers him a pen. The King looks in his face, then weakly: "You wish me to?" He traces a few lines rapidly with a feverish hand. He signs, and eagerly Crémieux seizes the act of abdication, carries it away with him, and starts off to show it to the people.

\* \* \*

*Same date.*—Louis Philippe is no longer King of France. He has left Paris. On quitting the Tuileries, he found carriages waiting at the base of the *obélisque* in the Place de la Concorde and stowed himself and his family in them—a dynasty removing without tuck of drum or blare of trumpet! The people has taken possession of the Palace, which is sacked and pillaged; thieves caught in the act are shot. Comedy succeeds tragedy. The mob takes turns to sit on the red velvet seat of the throne. They strike up the "Marseillaise," and an Italian plays the accompaniment on Marie Amélie's piano. A



woman in a red cap and pike in hand poses as a statue of Liberty.

\* \* \*

On the same day was held the historical sitting of the Chamber which ended in the proclamation of the Provisional Government. The Duchesse d'Orléans had taken refuge in the Chamber and was present at the debate, which was finally cut short by the irruption of the mob. The most prominent figures in the proceedings were Dupont de l'Eure, Odilon Barrot, Lamartine, who demanded the creation of a Provisional Government, and Ledru-Rollin, who proclaimed it and read out the list of its members.

*M. de Lamartine.*—I demand a Provisional Government. (*Hear ! hear !*)

*Cries from all parts of the House.*—Names ! names of the members of the Provisional Government. (Several members present a list to M. de Lamartine.)

*M. de Lamartine.*—Wait ! This Provisional Government will have as its duty, in my opinion, as its first and paramount duty, to establish the amnesty that is indispensable and a public truce among citizens ; secondly, to prepare at once the necessary measures to call upon the country as a whole and consult it, to consult the National Guard as a whole (*Hear ! hear !*)—yes, the country as a whole, all who as men have the rights of citizens. (*Prolonged applause.*) One last word. The powers that have succeeded one another for the past fifty years. . . .

The disorder reaches its climax. The invasion of the Chamber by the armed populace meets with no further obstacle. The President, M. Sauzet, leaves his chair, giving it up to Dupont de l'Eure. Amid loud shouts, Ledru-Rollin proclaims the Provisional Government, which includes Lamartine, Arago, Marie, Crémieux, Garnier-Pagès, Ledru-Rollin, Dupont de l'Eure. They proceed to the Hôtel de Ville, where the Republic is acclaimed and the picture destroyed representing Louis Philippe swearing to observe the Charter.

*A workman (taking possession of the tribune).*—The

public buildings must be respected ! and private property respected ! Why destroy ? why fire guns at these pictures ? We have shown that the people is not to be misgoverned ; now let us show that the people knows how to respect its possessions and do honour to its victory.

The words, uttered vigorously and with true native eloquence, are applauded to the echo. The Chamber empties ; it is four o'clock and past.

\* \* \*

*Same date.*—The Provisional Government is installed at the Hôtel de Ville. Outside in the Place an enormous crowd, with its currents and eddies, backwaters and counter-currents. The names are discussed and criticized. No two people are agreed on the policy of the new Government. The Jacobins are struggling for the upper hand, the Socialists the same. Many heads are turned !

\* \* \*

*February 25th.*—The people has called for the red flag. Lamartine has harangued them. The people cannot resist the tones of that æolian harp. With verses, speeches, poetical cadences its effervescence can always be brought to reason. Lamartine has known how to take it on the weak side of all crowds by wheedling it. I was there, I heard it all. I cannot deny I let myself be overcome like the rest ; yes, I wept, and the man who weeps is worse disarmed than the man who laughs. It was a siren voice—beseeching, supplicating, cajoling. Oh ! men of France, what cannot they do with you by soft speeches ! Lamartine let loose the flood, and the people was submerged !

\* \* \*

*March 1848.*—We have a provisional Directoire, an "emergency Dictatorship," as Lamartine says. Events follow their course. Louis Napoléon awaits the issue ; I may say he has foreseen it. Smith, who meets him almost every day in London, where he is more fêted than



ever, told me—I recall it vividly now—a saying of Montauban's. It was at a wedding dance. The Colonel, who shared the Prince's captivity, was dancing with the bride. After the waltz she spoke to him of some one she was interested in.

"We will appoint him Secretary of Embassy when we come to power," said Montauban.

"And when do you expect that to be?"

"Next year, without a doubt."

The Prince feels the same confidence. Already I see the gates of France opening before him. . . . And then. . . .

\* \* \*

*Undated.*—The Prince, always energetic, had made up his mind to visit Paris, accompanied by Orsi, Thélin, and Persigny. He procured an English passport. On the boat, no one recognized him; but in the train, between Antwerp and Paris, a passenger who had got in on the way, after looking hard at him for a minute or two, bowed and said he had met him before in London. "You are Prince Louis Napoléon!" he declared, and the Prince admitted as much. The man was a large factory owner having relations with the royal family. A strange coincidence! It was he who in February had taken the Duc de Nemours to England, and now he was returning to Paris with the man who perhaps was destined to reach the headship of the State. The Prince merely assured him that he was going to Paris for a few days simply to see with his own eyes what was going on. The traveller promised to respect his incognito. The train was obliged to stop at Creil, and the travellers had to finish the journey by road. Persigny has told me a story—true, I wonder, or an invention?—that, on reaching the barrier, they found themselves in front of a barricade guarded by armed men who compelled every traveller who passed through to remove a paving-stone from the structure. A woman, on seeing the Prince, would seem to have told him: "Come, young man, help us to put back the paving-stones in place," and the



Prince to have replied : " My good woman, that is precisely what I have come to Paris for." Another historical saying, to be numbered surely among the apocrypha.

No sooner was the Prince in Paris than everybody knew it instantly. There are secrets that leak out in the nature of things. That same evening the people were crowding before the kiosques on the boulevards, the print-sellers' and other shops where the Prince's portrait was displayed. Everybody was buying copies, tearing them out of each others' hands. The Prince indeed had let Armand Marrast know of his arrival ; and in a few hours not a Parisian but had the news. But meantime the Provisional Government was informed and intimated to the Prince that he must take his departure without delay. The Prince deemed it wiser to submit. He merely answered that he was going away for the time being, and took the train for Boulogne, whence he crossed by steamer to Folkestone. We shall see him again before long.

\* \* \*

*The Napoléonides.*—When a star of the first magnitude rises in the heavens, we see emerge around it heavenly bodies of less brilliance, so as to form a constellation of which it is the centre. Thus the Napoléonides gravitate about Louis Napoléon. They think the Bourbons have disappeared from the political firmament only to make room for them. They are many in number. Not a few have pushed to the front with the coming of the Second Republic. Of the Emperor's brothers the only one surviving is King Jérôme, now sixty-four. He has returned to France, a boon he owes to Victor Hugo's speech of last year. His son, Prince Napoleon, is quite young, a man of twenty-six, who was an officer in the army of Würtemberg, and has found constituents in Corsica to return him to the National Assembly, where he will take his seat. His ideas are wide apart from those of his cousin, Prince Louis Napoléon. The daughter of the Ex-King of Westphalia, the Princess Mathilde, is two years older than her brother. She was to have married Prince Louis Napoléon ; but the plan was

frustrated by circumstances I have already indicated. The Princess Mathilde has given her hand to a Russian Prince, Anatole Demidoff, who brought down on himself by the marriage the displeasure of Nicholas I. Anyway, the union proved unhappy, and after six years a divorce cut the Gordian knot. Napoleon's elder brother, Joseph, has left no living descendants except his eldest daughter, Zénaïde, married to the Prince of Canino, eldest son of Lucien Bonaparte, the Emperor's second brother. Three other sons of Lucien's will be representatives of the people—the eldest, Lucien, born in 1813, Pierre Napoléon, born in 1815, and Antoine, born in 1816. The Prince of Canino has grandsons, one of whom has embraced the career of an ecclesiastic, while the other is attending the classes of the Military School.

Of Napoleon's sisters, there exist as heirs only the daughter of Élixa, the Princess Napoléone Bacciochi, now Comtesse Canarese, and the Murats, son and daughter of Caroline, the Prince Lucien, now deputy for Corsica, the Marquise Pepoli and the Comtesse Ruspoli. The Murats wait like others on the future that is perhaps now near at hand.

\* \* \*

*May 4th.*—The Republic is proclaimed. For how long will it last? Best wait for the Presidential elections. I have good hopes for the Prince, and I am working for the cause; but I run against the man Ferrère crossing my path. I augur no good from the notions of Louis Blanc and his Utopia of national workshops. They have not managed to dispense with a Banker in the Provisional Government. I still think, as I have always done, that the Republic will be undone by the Bankers. It is a disease endemic in France; too many bankers and too many talkers—I would say *avocats*. Napoleon detested them, and I follow his example. By giving the workmen Socialistic nostrums to rely upon, the theorists are filling their minds with revolt against the laws. Before long they will want to be the absolute masters. Too much is told them about their rights, and not enough about their



COUNT D'ORSAY.





duties. When Governments come to find themselves forced by facts not to satisfy their demands, there will be no barrier left to restrain the flood.

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*May 10th.*—I had foreseen as much, and yesterday has confirmed my presentiments. A manifestation had been organized in favour of Poland, and this afforded a pretext for invading the Chamber. Is the Police at the bottom of it? Possibly. At any rate, if it was a trap, the Socialists, Louis Blanc, Barbès, Blanqui, Raspail, Sobrier, Caussidière have plunged headlong into it. I am told the organizer of this *coup de main* is no other than Huber, a suspicious character to my thinking. The crowd forced its way into the Assembly with shouts of "Vive la Pologne!" The tribune was carried. The Assembly Hall was finally cleared only by calling in the Garde Mobile. The principal Socialists—Louis Blanc, Albert, Caussidière, Sobrier, Barbès, Thomas, Blanqui, Flette, Quentin—have been arrested.

\* \* \*

*May 18th.*—The Executive Commission, entrusted with the exercise of power pending the publication of the Constitution, possesses only a ghost of authority. All very well for Lamartine to declare that the Provisional Government abdicated the dictatorship into the bosom of the People's Government—the said People vociferates that it is being deceived. It is losing faith; the arrests of May have exasperated its temper. On its side, the Assembly has chosen to force a crisis while gagging the friends of the workman. The workman is planning his revenge. To whom does he look for it? Perhaps to the Prince. I know our partisans are acting. In many districts of Paris the conviction is growing ever stronger that, to put an end to the general muddle, *a man* is wanted. And what man better than he can answer the popular hopes?

\* \* \*

*June 22nd.*—The blunder is made. The National Workshops are closed. It means a hundred thousand

workpeople thrown on the streets of the capital. The Director of Workshops, M. Émile Thomas, is no doubt generous enough, but his will cannot check the torrent that will pour forth its boiling waves. The Executive Commission is playing into the hands of the worst reaction.

Did it not entrust the report on the reform of the National Workshops to a professed Jesuit, de Falloux, who hates the democracy? The report, conceived in honeyed terms, full of hypocrisy, is an insult to the proletariat. The Prince would never speak like that. Cavaignac is appointed Minister of War. He is to assemble fifty thousand men in Paris—a direct incitement to civil war! God grant the dreadful cloud do not burst! The National Workshops are organizing, too, for fighting. Already they count a hundred thousand combatants—at their head the members of the “Society of the Rights of Man,” and Caussidière’s and Sobrier’s myrmidons. Cavaignac is resolved to treat the Parisians like the Arabs. He has put at the head of his troops Generals who have won their laurels in Africa—Lamoricière, Damesme, Bedeau.

\* \* \*

*June 23rd.*—The storm is let loose. Paris, since this morning and during the night, has clothed herself with barricades. Fighting is going on in the Faubourg Poissonnière. There are numbers of wounded. General Lafontaine is killed. Fighting also on the Left Bank, in the Rue Saint-André-des-Arts, in the Rue La Harpe, at the Panthéon. It is civil war. In the Rue Saint-Jacques and side streets the people are barricading. Bedeau is wounded trying to seize the approaches to the Petit Pont. A Colonel in command of a battalion of the 11th Legion falls with a bullet in his heart.

I hurry out for news. There is no doubt about it. The insurrection is winning the day. At the Pont Saint-Michel the struggle is desperate. Cavaignac, on horseback, rides through the middle of the combatants with imminent risk of paying for his boldness with his life.



Bedeau is carried off bleeding. Duvivier is appointed to succeed him. They count the dead by hundreds.

\* \* \*

*June 24th.*—The Chamber has voted a state of siege. Cavaignac is appointed head of the executive. It is a dictatorship. I think he exercises it as a soldier should, but as a soldier implacable in face of the foe. The Quartier Latin and the establishments in that neighbourhood have become the general headquarters of the insurgents. Round the Panthéon they have erected a veritable fortress with its advanced posts, its counterscarps. General Damesme directs the attack, while Lamoricière fights at the Château d'Eau and Duvivier at the opening of the Rue Saint-Antoine. Damesme, in the act of trying to force a barricade in the Rue de l'Estrapade, falls mortally wounded. General Bréa, who replaces him, is unfortunately a person suspect by the populace. I fear for him ; he has a hard task before him.

*June 24th, evening.*—The struggle continues without any sort of lull. Bréa has seized the main barricades round the Panthéon, especially the one in the Rue Mouffetard. The people's answer is shouts of "Death ! death !"

\* \* \*

*June 25th.*—Bréa is extending his operations. He has quitted the Jardin des Plantes, where he had established his headquarters. Négrier strives in vain to master the insurrection in the Faubourg Saint-Antoine, Lamoricière in the Faubourg Poissonnière, at the Porte Saint-Denis, and the Temple.

I have just come across Smith. He tells me the insurrection can have no other result but the accession to power of Louis Napoléon. Why? Because among the people there exists a firm conviction that Cavaignac means to massacre all the insurgents, and these have their eyes fixed on the Prince. . . .

\* \* \*

*June 26th.*—Grave tidings. Bréa has been taken at

the Barrière de Fontainebleau and carried off in the direction of the Luxembourg with two of his officers. There they shot them at point-blank range. Lamoricière continues the struggle in the direction of La Villette, the Faubourg Saint-Antoine, and the Bastille, where a number of houses are no better than ruins.

I have just this moment heard of the death of General Négrier. In the Place de la Bastille a bullet pierced his heart. Another victim—the Archbishop of Paris, Monseigneur Affre—struck by a ball in the loins in front of the barricade in the Rue Saint-Antoine.

*June 26th, evening.*—The battle has been raging for four days. No quarter is given on either side. The streets are strewn with dead bodies, the pavements red with blood, ankle-deep in blood.

Meantime the insurrection is plainly getting the upper hand. In a few hours, perhaps this very evening, all will be finished. Alas! a terrible finish! Who shall count the victims of these ebullitions of popular passion?

\* \* \*

*July 6th.*—I have been to the Place de la Concorde to attend the funeral ceremony which, to the minds of its organizers, is to pacify the last remaining shreds of animosity between the Government and the population. Three Bishops, at an immense altar raised near the Obelisk, performed Mass for the victims of the insurrection. So says the official programme; but the demonstration is merely official, and therefore cold. The car that was to take the bodies all the way to the Colonne de Juillet went no farther than the Madeleine. A cloud of mourning broods over Paris.

I have been through several working-class districts, and nowhere did I see any but ill-omened figures, anger depicted in every face. In the Place de la Bastille a man was lifting a flagstone all red with blood. I asked him what he wanted to do with it.

“It is my son’s blood; he was killed there,” the old man told me. “His brothers *must* have it always under their eyes.”

\* \* \*

I jot down a *bon mot* of Lamartine's :

"There are names which draw the crowd as a red rag attracts unreasoning animals."

Poor Lamartine ! he is always in the clouds !

\* \* \*

Guizot is in England. He has joined Louis Philippe, and the two great wrecks console each other. Guizot attributes his fall to Lamartine. A paper was found in his house with these words from his hand : "The more I listen to Lamartine, the more I feel we were not born to understand each other." There were thoughts of setting the law in motion, but he has had time to put the Channel between himself and the French police. In London he lives in a small house in a remote quarter of the town, where he busies himself with his studies and his historical works. He has sworn never to go back to France unless he is recalled, that is, unless he is offered a seat in the Chamber. I don't believe he will keep his oath.<sup>1</sup>

\* \* \*

*August 15th.*—I have just seen Count d'Orsay. We had a long talk about the Prince and his future destinies. The Count spoke also of Lady Blessington and Gore House. Alas ! there is a heavy black cloud threatening the fair Marguerite. The Count and she have drained over-fast the cup of riches. Friends have contributed to empty it. There are a host of creditors, who are beginning to make a noise. . . . The charming and most hospitable lady cannot satisfy them. Like Walter Scott, she has condemned herself to "hard labour" for the publishers. Her books sell well not only in England, but also on the Continent, where Tauchnitz has already made room for eight volumes of hers, and in America, where Willes, the publisher, blows his loudest trumpets in her honour ; but the clamours of jewellers, moneylenders, lace-dealers, etc.,

<sup>1</sup> "As a matter of fact, he went back in 1849, after an interview at Claremont with Louis Philippe, whose guest he was every week. The dethroned monarch had evidently entrusted him with a secret mission to the partisans of the Orleanist cause—a mission that failed."—BARON D'AMBÈS.



drown all these acclamations of literary fame. Poor Marguerite suffers a daily martyrdom, in constant dread of the apparition of tipstaffs and bailiffs. D'Orsay himself is far from easy, for his finances are also compromised. I believe he is in Paris only to avoid annoyance. I cannot help pitying them both. They are two fine natures. I have only one fault to find with them—a too great readiness to welcome all and sundry to their friendship. At Gore House everybody found admittance, and it was there I encountered certain sharpers whose dealings with the Prince I dreaded.

\* \* \*

Two of the Prince's cousins were already Representatives before June. Since that date Louis Napoléon has been added to the list, having been elected by four Departments.

Wisely enough, the Prince has begun by refusing the call, and has issued the following public manifesto :

“I am proud to have been elected Representative of the People in Paris and three other Departments. It was an ample recompense in my eyes for thirty years of exile and six of captivity ; but the injurious suspicions my election has given rise to, the troubles it has been the pretext for, the hostility of the Executive Power, make it my duty to refuse this honour, which they say has been won by intrigue. I desire order and the maintenance of a Republic, prudent, great, and intelligent ; and seeing that, from no will of my own, I foment discord, I place my resignation, not without keen regret, in your hands.

“Soon, I hope, calm will be restored and suffer me to re-enter France as the humblest of her citizens, but also as one of the most devoted to the peace and prosperity of my country.

“LOUIS NAPOLÉON BONAPARTE.”

In September a fifth Department declared in his favour. Then the Prince could resist no longer ; he yielded to the popular demand. He took his seat in the

National Assembly and pronounced the following words, which express his full and honest convictions :

"I want here and now, and on the first day it is allowed me to sit among you, to state freely and openly the sentiments that animate me.

"After thirty-four years of proscription and exile, I have returned at last to my fatherland and recovered my rights as a citizen !

"The Republic has done me this honour ; let the Republic here accept my oath of gratitude, my oath of devotion ! And let the generous patriots who have sent me to this House feel sure I shall do my utmost endeavour to justify their suffrages by working with you to maintain the tranquillity of the country, its first and foremost need, and to develop the democratic institutions the People has a right to claim.

"For long years I have been able to consecrate to France only the meditations of exile and captivity ; to-day the path along which you tread is open to me. Receive me in your ranks, dear colleagues, with the same feelings of affection and confidence I bring myself to the work before me. My behaviour, ever inspired by duty, ever animated by respect for the laws, my behaviour will prove, routing ill-natured passions that have essayed to blacken my character and have me proscribed again, that no one here more than I is resolved to devote himself to the defence of order and the strengthening and fortifying of the Republic.

"LOUIS NAPOLÉON BONAPARTE."

\* \* \*

The Prince told us, Granier de Cassagnac and myself, a very interesting story.

Dining one evening with Thiers and Molé, the little man with the spectacles said to Louis Napoléon :

"We are persuaded of your triumph. You are going to be elected. Shall I give you a piece of advice in case, as is probable, the votes raise you to the Presidency ?"

"Go on, by all means," smiled the Prince, well used to the historian's little ways.

"Well, considering the tendencies of modern society, we consider, Molé and I, that you must cut off your moustache. If he or I were elected, that's what we should do."

"Oh! no, no! let us all three keep our moustaches!" replied the Prince, bursting into a great laugh.

\* \* \*

The Prince's portrait is in every hovel, his life in all men's hands. His candidature for the Presidency is acclaimed in street-songs at the cross-roads and in the public squares. Béranger, Victor Hugo, have helped him more than anybody. He is "The Man of the Day"; he is "The Man of To-morrow."

\* \* \*

*Caricatures.*—There are floods of them, piles of them, cartloads of them! The Prince is shown in the drollest situations uttering the most extravagant words. He is a blind man led by an eagle on a leash. He is a little herdboyc driving a flock of geese towards an imaginary Capitol. He is in a car entering the Élysée on the shoulders of Napoleon I., and followed by Girardin thumping a big drum and Thiers puffing at a *cornet-à-piston*. He emerges from a sun, wearing a little hat atop of ass's ears. He is a plank pitched into the "Red" Sea by Montalembert and Odilon Barrot. He is a basket carried by two cocottes. He is an eagle with a false beak, a dummy dressed up in the Emperor's clothes, a fox trying to eat sour grapes on which are inscribed the names of Imperial victories. He is a lover kissing the Republic and stabbing her at the same moment. He is a London roisterer with a light woman perched on each knee. He is a gentleman-sportsman launching toy boats in the Channel to cross to Boulogne. He is a Swiss bourgeois drinking beer and smoking a pipe, the smoke from which forms itself into visions of empire. He is all this, is Louis Napoléon; in a word he is "The Man of the Day."



The masses are generally for him—that is what makes his strength. He is not the man of any one party ; he is the man of all parties.

\* \* \*

*November 12th.*—At last we see the Constitution of 1848 voted and universal suffrage established.

Legislative Power : a single Assembly of 750 members assisted by a Council of State to prepare the laws. All salaried functionaries to be excluded from the Chamber. To qualify, an elector must be a Frenchman born, be twenty-one at least, and have never suffered legal condemnation. To be eligible for election, he must fulfil the same conditions as an elector, but be twenty-five. Executive : a President chosen for four years by universal suffrage, having the armed forces at his disposal, though without commanding them, not having power to declare war or sign treaties except with the approval of the Assembly.

The battle raged fiercely over the question of the Presidency. Grévy was against, saying :

“ We must beware of the ambitious man who might refuse to vacate the Presidential chair. Especially must we be suspicious in the case of a scion of a once reigning family. At a time of crisis, ‘ when misery and disappointment deliver over the suffering people to those who mask under their fair promises their designs against liberty,’ who can tell if such an one might not overthrow the Republic ? ”

Grévy’s wish was that, instead of naming a President of the Republic, the Executive Power should simply be delegated to the President of the Council of Ministers appointed by the Assembly, the latter always having the right to revoke it.

Nevertheless, thanks to Lamartine, our ideas have triumphed.

## CHAPTER XVI

### THE PRINCE ELECTED PRESIDENT OF THE FRENCH REPUBLIC

*December 1848*

The Tenth of December ; "the sun of Austerlitz"—Victory!—"Not an election, but an acclamation"—The Election at Lille—The Duchesse d'Orléans; a Regency impossible—Electoral results—Sitting of December 20th; Louis Napoléon takes the Oath to the Constitution—Triumphal return to the Élysée—A private word with the Baron d'Ambès—Pen-portrait by Victor Hugo—The Odilon Barrot Ministry—Grand Review; a symbolic kite—A "Women's Rights" Meeting in '48—Socialists and Reformers an ugly race, according to the Baron—The Imperial Eagle.

*December 10th.*—The weather is magnificent; "the sun of Austerlitz," say our friends as they meet. . . . And yet, never before did such suspense hold me by the throat like a hand of iron, as we wait for the results of the Presidential election! Yes, doubtless I trembled with intense excitement in those glorious, those insane days of Strassburg and Boulogne, and that 5th of June when Louis Napoléon was elected by four enthusiastic Departments, and that 17th of September which completed his triumph. But to-day it is the bestowal of a fairy crown. . . . If the Prince is proclaimed First Magistrate of the Republic, there is no doubt he will soon exchange that title for another—the only one that is really suitable for him.

The final results are not yet known, but the figures that come in from time to time, harbingers of joy, leave few doubts remaining.

"History is going to repeat itself," Conneau said to me—"history, that is always the same." The 18th of Brumaire

was the first revenge of order over the Revolutionary idea. After came the days of 1830, then the June days so close to us, each time with a return to sober reason. The 10th of December will be a new date, and the next stage, if it comes, will be the re-establishment of the Empire. Each period of *slackening* is followed by a turn of the vice that tightens up the screw."

"Yes, but the thread wears out . . . by dint of screwing," remarked Delagrangé, who heard us.

\* \* \*

*Same date.*—Victory! Victory! The Prince is elected President of the Republic by a majority of over four millions of votes!

\* \* \*

*December 11th.*—The Parliamentarians are dazed in face of the Prince's triumph. They are trying to make people believe in electoral pressure. The suggestion is contradicted by the fact—which everybody knows—that, on the contrary, the Government did all they could to discountenance the Prince, while the administration was positively hostile to him.

"It is not an election, it is an acclamation," declared Emile de Girardin. Everywhere votes were polled with a sort of calm and self-contained enthusiasm that had something inevitable and impressive about it.

It is believed that M. Waldeck-Rousseau<sup>1</sup> will be given the task of drawing up the report on this extraordinary election.

At breakfast Widomski reminded me that, at the time of Louise Philippe's fall, Louis Napoléon said to his cousin, Lady Douglas:

"Before a year is out, I shall be Head of France."

\* \* \*

The Prince's election is undoubtedly due in a great measure to the voting at Lille. The speeches Ledru-

<sup>1</sup> Father of the celebrated Waldeck-Rousseau who played so great a part under the Third Republic.



Rollin delivered in that town, at the banquets which preceded the fall of Louis Philippe stirred the soul of the population to the depths. They realized that salvation could come only as the result of a forceful energy, an invincible firmness, and they know the Prince possesses these. That is why they have given him an overwhelming majority which exerted its full weight in the balance.

\* \* \*

*The Duchesse d'Orléans.*—I cannot deny that much sympathy goes out towards her, and without a doubt she deserves it. The idea of a Regency was impracticable. It was a generous thought of the Orleanists, but an impossible plan. If the Duchess had been bidden to assume, as guardian of her son, the Comte de Paris, the reins of power, she would, I quite believe, have bravely and worthily carried out the heavy task. She is indeed highly respected by the population of Paris, and she would have been well received as Regent if the Assembly had so decided. She is now thirty-four, very nearly thirty-five. She is a Mecklenburger, a German therefore, but with a mind as frank and open as a French woman. Her marriage with the Duc d'Orléans, which at first met with keen opposition on the part of the family of Louis Philippe, was concluded thanks to the efforts of the King of Prussia, who considered it a guarantee of peace. The fatal accident at Neuilly put a sudden end to this happy union. After her husband's death the Duchess wished to live in retirement with her son. She occupied the Pavillon de Marsan at the Louvre; the Duc de Nemours, the most disagreeable of her sons-in-law, envied her that residence and endeavoured to have it given up to him. She refused, the King intervened; she stood firm as ever, and only consented on the promise of compensating advantages. The result was a coldness that still continued in February last. The insurgents, when they invaded the Tuileries, could not sack her apartments, because the Commissioners of the Provisional Government had established themselves there. I was able to visit the



LADY BLESSINGTON.





rooms. In the great salon, there was a side-table on which books and papers lay, the Comte de Paris's copy-books and note-books side by side with Lamartine's *Histoire des Girondins*, which the Duchess was reading at the very moment the Palace was attacked. Her ivory paper-knife still rested between the pages. On another little table I saw a request for her intervention signed with the name of a Socialist, who besought her to save him from prosecution. The Duchess had written in the margin: *Very specially recommended*. She is kind-hearted and charitable, I am assured.

\* \* \*

*December 18th.*—The figures are now known. It is dazzling, terrifying almost. By five million and a half of votes the People has declared its will to have *one man* as its head. It desires him for chief. To-morrow it will demand him as master.

Follow the precise results of the Presidential elections :

Louis Napoléon . . . . .	5,436,326 votes.
General Cavaignac . . . . .	1,548,167 „
Ledru-Rollin . . . . .	370,729 „
Raspail . . . . .	36,629 „
Lamartine . . . . .	17,978 „
Changarnier . . . . .	4,687 „
Others . . . . .	36,256 „

It is the peasantry and the soldiery who have raised Napoleon to this height of glory ; that is to say, the ancient soil of France and the bayonets that guard it.

\* \* \*

*December 21st.*—M. Waldeck-Rousseau yesterday evening ascended the tribune and read out, in the name of the Commission entrusted with the counting of the returns of the Presidential election, the eagerly expected report, in which he certified the regularity of the proceedings, and declared the citizen Louis Napoléon actually elected by the suffrages of the French people.

Next General Cavaignac rose and said :

"Citizens, I have the honour to inform the Assembly that the Ministers have now tendered their collective resignation. In my turn I hereby resign into the hands of the Assembly the powers it has been pleased to entrust to me."

Reiterated cheers greeted the words. The General resumed his seat, and the President, M. Marrast, put to the vote the conclusions of the Commission, which were adopted almost unanimously, pronounced the brief Constitutional formula which consecrated the Prince's election, formally installed him in his functions for four years (that is, till the second Sunday in May, 1852), and invited him to mount the tribune to take the oath. At a sign from M. Marrast as he ended, Louis Napoléon entered, wearing the grand riband of the Legion of Honour, baldrick-wise over his black frock, and stood awaiting the reading of the oath, which the President immediately proceeded with. The Prince repeated the words and swore fidelity to the Constitution.

Then the President said further :

"I call upon God and men to witness the oath which has just been taken. . . . The word is with you," he ended, turning to *the man* who was now to pronounce his first words as President of the French Republic.

The Prince stood motionless and silent for a moment, his hand between the buttons of his coat, his brow pale, his eyes lost in a look of absorption. What dream was hovering like a mighty bird in the sky of his soul? He was impressed with the gravity of the moment. At last he spoke, thanking the Assembly, expressing his sense of the signal honour done him, and of the duties henceforth incumbent upon him as the result of his election by the suffrages of his fellow citizens, promising his loyal support for the maintenance of the Republic and his best efforts to secure a just, firm, and progressive government.

When he had finished the Assembly sprang to its feet, full of enthusiasm and confidence.

"Vive la République!" was the cry that burst from

every breast. M. Marrast begged the officials of the House to accompany the President, in order to do him all proper honour till his arrival at the Élysée.<sup>1</sup> The Prince went up to M. Cavaignac and wrung his hand amid the plaudits of all present, and finally quitted the Assembly, accompanied by M. Lacrosse, the Vice-President, and Generals Elzan, Garnier, and Lebreton.

His family, a few friends, and myself were waiting his coming at the Élysée. It was a dazzling sight when we saw approaching this train of honour, these ushers, these dragoons, these lancers, these Generals in full uniform, that Staff, among whom glittered the two *Chefs d'Escadron*, Ney<sup>2</sup> and Fleury, proud and gallant officers. All extended hands of welcome : Odilon Barrot, Léon de Malleville, Drouyn de Lhuys. M. Lacrosse once more congratulated our friend, who then withdrew to his apartments, beckoning me to follow.

I remained a few minutes with him, and when quite by ourselves he said to me :

"Well, dear friend, do you remember our talks and our dreams in the Arenaberg days ?"

"They are graven in my memory. Could I ever forget how often you reiterated your faith in the star of destiny ? Faith removes mountains . . . it does better—it wins over a whole nation to the love of a single man, which is perhaps harder still. Prince, I am more touched than I can say by your friendly attitude to me at such a moment. . . . My only regret is that I need never more tell you : 'Count on me . . . ' seeing you have now reached the summit of your wishes."

"Come, come, we are not at the summit yet," answered the Prince with a smile. "This is only a halt by the way, a terrace where we stay a moment to rest as we gaze at the horizon . . . of men and things."

<sup>1</sup> Previously the Élysée-Bourbon. It was built in 1718 by the Comte d'Evreux. Subsequently it belonged to Mme de Pompadour. In 1774 it was bought by the financier Beaujan ; in 1786 by Louis XVI. ; under the Empire by Murat. Napoleon I. signed his abdication (June 21st, 1815) there. Under the Restoration it was occupied by the Duc de Berry. Under the Government of July (Louis Philippe) it was intended to be the residence of Marie Amélie in case of the King's death.

<sup>2</sup> Edgar Ney, the youngest son of Marshal Ney shot in 1815.



He gave me his hand and so left me, amazed at such soaring ambition. I had caught his meaning, but it was my cue to hold my tongue.

\* \* \*

*A portrait in Indian ink.* — Victor Hugo has written :

“On Thursday, December 20th, 1848 . . . we saw enter the Hall of the Constituent Assembly a man, still young, dressed in black, wearing on his coat a medal and grand riband of the Legion of Honour.

“All heads turned to mark him. A wan face, the bony, emaciated outlines of which were brought into startling relief by the shaded lamps ; a large, long nose ; moustaches, a curling lock of hair over a narrow brow, the eye small and dull, the attitude timid and anxious, no likeness to the Emperor : it was the citizen Charles Louis Napoléon Bonaparte.”

Well, it is not strikingly like, this portrait ! Yes, Napoleon's face was pale (but not wan !). Yes, his eyes downcast (but not dull, and how they could flash on occasion !). Yes, a curled lock overhung his brow (but not a narrow brow). Napoleon's forehead was broad rather, and always thoughtful. His attitude is neither timid nor anxious, but upright and imposing ; his slim figure more imposing on horseback, for the legs are short. His movements are slow, a trifle solemn, but not stilted. His nose no doubt is rather long, and he can see well beyond it ! He sees far ahead, I say ; and that is why so many people have failed to understand him.

\* \* \*

*December 22nd.*—The Ministry is appointed. It is drawn from the Left Centre. It includes :

Odilon Barrot, President of the Council and Minister of Justice ;

Drouyn de Lhuys, Minister for Foreign Affairs ;

Léon de Malleville, Minister of the Interior ;

General Rulhière, Minister of War ;

M. de Tracy, Minister of Marine ;  
 M. de Falloux, Minister of Education ;  
 M. Bixio, Minister of Agriculture ;  
 M. Passy, Minister of Finances ;  
 M. Léon Faucher, Minister of Public Works.

There is no doubt of this—these men recommended to the Prince by M. Thiers are strangely assorted ; it is a selection that cannot but cause anxious criticism. “ It is a piece of patchwork,” protested the *National*, “ a card of samples ; it reflects the seven colours of the rainbow ! ” At least Louis Napoléon has proved himself to have risen superior to calumnies and old grudges. If it turns to his disadvantage, he will at any rate be left with the distinction of having, like Louis XII., forgotten the outrages and insults that preceded his triumph.

In truth the Prince plays a dangerous game, but one admirably adapted to favour his ultimate plans if he succeeds. It is what he calls a policy of see-saw. He means to govern by utilizing contradictory views, mutually opposed ambitions. In this I recognize the influence of Queen Hortense, who used often to tell him : “ Reject no one, without giving yourself to any one ! ” This is political chemistry of a highly interesting sort !

\* \* \*

*December 24th.*—To-day what an unforgettable sight ! what an *Imperial* spectacle—if we may use the word, living under a Republic as we do !

The President has just reviewed the troops of the Paris garrison. It is the first time the thing has been done under the same conditions. It called for a certain boldness for the Prince to hold this review as he did, dressed in the uniform of Commander-General of the National Guard, wearing a cocked hat with white feathers intermingled with three tricolour plumes and the grand riband of the Legion of Honour, mounted on an English sorrel thoroughbred, and followed by a brilliant staff, on which were Changarnier, Edgar Ney, Fleury, Pierre Bonaparte, Persigny—now promoted *chef-d'escadron*—good old Persigny, truest of the true ! . . . There were



mustered 40,000 infantry, 3,000 cavalry, eight batteries of artillery. This colossal deployment of troops occupied the Champs-Élysées, the Tuileries, the Place de la Concorde, the Rue Royale, the Rue Castiglione, the Rue de la Paix, and the Boulevard de la Madeleine. The march-past before the Head of the State, who was stationed alongside the Obelisk, lasted hours. Cries were heard of "Vive Napoléon !" and even "Vive l'Empereur !" A kite, shaped like an eagle, was seen to rise in the air above the Prince's head—a little idea of mine. Pierre Noël, a servant, held it till Changarnier gave orders to cut the string. . . . There is no doubt the popular voice acclaimed the Empire in the person of the President.

I said it needed some dash of daring for him to don a costume so uncivilian, so warlike. Thiers tried to dissuade him, preferring ordinary dress, but the President stuck to his point. It will cost him a few broadsides of ridicule and indignation from the opposition journals. . . .

\* \* \*

*December 1848.*—Some days ago a banquet was held in the Salle Valentino, Rue Saint-Honoré, by the *Socialist women*.

A novelty, this! How the words contradict each other—*women Socialists*! What does it mean? Women who want to vote and become Representatives? Alack! folks chatter far too much already in the Assemblies without *their* adding their cackle. Women who want the equality of the sexes? Why, they will have everything to lose by trying to put themselves on the same level as men, for in that case man will treat woman as an equal, and his heavy fist, which now gladly refrains from striking at sight of her charming weakness, will be stayed no longer. Women who want their emancipation? But what will their inexperience and sentimentalism make of independence in the darkling, robber-haunted forest we call society?

Silly fancies! silly fancies! And, above all, a going back when they think they are going forward! Dear little women, so charming and lovable, with the open



heart and smiling mouth, the delicate wit and the fondling gestures, stay, stay what you are, strong in your very weakness.

But I am bold to say that pretty women, fascinating women, women of sweetness and charm, can never be Socialists.

It is only the plain are caught in the toils—out of envy and hatred, perhaps.

As for the men—Saint-Simon, Proudhon—it is true they are ugly fellows too, all these adventurers of Republican speculation.

\* \* \*

*December 31st, 1848.*—What a strange year this which finishes to-day ! The Royalty of France ends pitifully, in a flight. A Republic, sublime in its adherents' eyes, but perhaps condemned to death from the first day of its existence, instals itself upon the ruined throne. And in the noise and confusion of a parliamentary system born of a Revolution the great voice of the poet falls silent, while the stammering accents are heard of an Assembly and a Ministry that are already nodding to their fall ! A proscribed exile, whose acts were ridiculed ten years ago, who was kept six years a prisoner in the gloom of a dungeon, suddenly appears, bearing the aureole of a glorious name, and lo ! in an instant he is at the summit of power. . . .

Meantime insurrection is abroad at Vienna, at Venice, at Milan. Bohemia rises in insurrection. Hungary is in revolt. North Germany is disturbed. The Roumanians rebel against their Hospodar, the Italians against the Pope. Everywhere is, as it were, a mighty shaking of chains. . . .

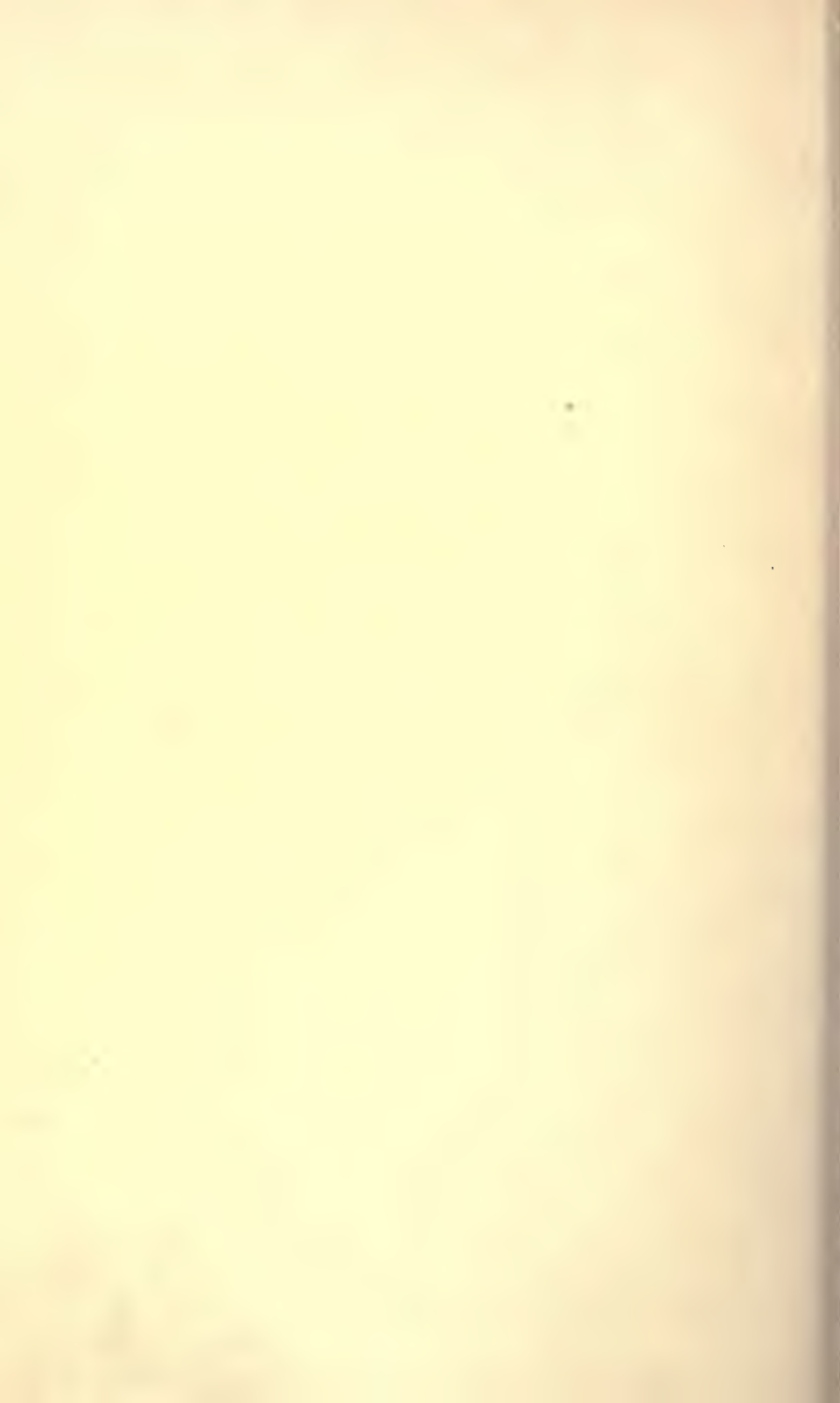
At first view 'tis a sublime spectacle, the Liberty of Peoples striving to break her fetters. But are the Peoples ripe for the freedom they clamour for and for which, so heroically in truth, they meet death at the barricades ? Yes, that is the question. In France the answer, I think, is doubtful. And far off I see rise the figure of an eagle with spreading wings !



**PART II**

**THE PRINCE-PRESIDENT**





## CHAPTER I

### AFTER THE "PLÉBISCITE"

*January—March 1849*

January 1st, 1849—Reflections on the past year—Aresé arrives on a secret mission—The Duc de Noailles succeeds Chateaubriand at the Academy, to the exclusion of Balzac!—Survey of political parties—Boulay de la Meurthe elected Vice-President of the Republic—Great men at the dinner-table—The Prince-President pays his debts and rewards his friends—Anecdotes of the painter Isabey—The Elections—Changarnier—Eve of the polling—Attitude of the Army—The *Dix-Décembre* founded—Stormy sittings: Crémieux, Barrot, Ledru-Rollin—State of parties in the Chamber—The new Ministry—Thiers and his horse Jata—More stormy scenes—The Baron d'Ambès lights on a startling piece of information—Roman affairs.

*January 1st, 1849.*—To-day, at ten o'clock, the President, in the uniform of a General of the National Guard, and attended by Field-Marshal Sébastien, Molitor, Reille, and Bugeaud, received the Functionaries and the Diplomatic Body. Comment was aroused by his expressing to the Nuncio his hope of seeing Pope Pius IX. re-established in his territories.

. . . I cannot help thinking of the year which has just closed, so tormented by disturbances and political storms . . . Forty-eight! an historical date . . . civil war . . . bloodshed . . . gloom . . . and at its end this fabulous triumph, Louis Napoléon set up as our deliverer, at the helm of the ship of State tossed by the hurricanes of revolution!

At last life has resumed its normal course. The foreigners who had fled have reappeared, and have resumed their interrupted business. This France of ours

seems always to recover her balance after fluctuations so violent as to threaten to plunge her into the abyss.

\* \* \*

*January 3rd.*—Saw Arese. He was at Genoa when he heard of the Presidential election. His delight was boundless. He arrived on December 25th, and dined with Napoleon the same evening. His visit is not merely a complimentary one; it has another object. He is sent in reality by Gioberti—that is to say, by Charles Albert—in order to sound the opinions of the man who, in 1831, fought on behalf of Italian liberty. Is he still, now that he has reached his exalted position, favourably disposed towards the Peninsula?

The King of Sardinia is unable to grasp the fact that the President of the French Republic cannot hold quite the same political views as did the young exile of twenty years ago.

Arese has hopes, in spite of everything. For myself, I shrink from encouraging the Prince to embark on this course, notwithstanding the sympathy which I have for Piedmont. Would it not be a great mistake to bring about war between ourselves and Austria, simply to please another nation?

\* \* \*

*January 12th.*—M. de Noailles has taken the place of poor Chateaubriand beneath the dome of the Academy. Public opinion indicated Balzac for the vacancy; but the Assembly decided otherwise. So much the worse for genius which has neither title of nobility nor a suitable coat of arms. This somehow strikes me as altogether absurd. The fame of an historic name is one thing, that of a noble work of literature quite another.

What has the Duc de Noailles produced? Some addresses and a history of Saint-Cyr. Well and good. What has Balzac produced? (I am quite indifferent as to whether or no he has a right to the “de” which he granted to himself some ten years ago.) One of the most enormous and monumental masses of literary production



(whether one likes it or no) that adorn letters; for which he well deserves, in the evening of his life, to occupy an arm-chair of glorious repose.

\* \* \*

*January 15th.*—Yesterday I accompanied the Prince to the Théâtre Français, where Rachel scored a tremendous success, and where he himself was greeted with acclamation. To-day, in front of Notre Dame, as he was visiting the Hôtel-Dieu, an immense crowd gave vent to prolonged cheers as he passed by. His popularity increases daily. And no wonder, for is not the Bonapartist party the only one which is really organized—above all, which has a leader? Look at the others:

The Orleanist party is without a definite programme, without serious aims, or even a leader, for the Comte de Paris is powerless amid the intrigues which a few families of high rank are weaving round him. It does not possess an organ. Its partisans serve their own ends rather than his, and most of them seem to be ashamed of him. Its Princes are insignificant creatures, destitute of any noble pride or proper ambition. The party is merely a meeting-place of ill-assorted ambitions.

The Legitimists have no influence. Their party is the pale reflection of a past which nobody wishes to revive. It represents nothing but the effort of reaction against progress. It is unpopularity personified.

The rest is mere confusion—full of lightning-flashes of genius and of insistent clamour, I allow, but it represents the unknown. This recalls to me a *bon mot* of General Bugeaud's whose advice was asked the evening before the elections by the Mayor of Saint-Brieuc:

"For whom are we to vote—for General Cavaignac or for Prince Louis?"

"Cavaignac," replied Bugeaud, "represents the Republic. Louis Bonaparte stands for the unknown. I vote for the unknown."

\* \* \*

*January 20th.*—Boulay de la Meurthe has just been elected Vice-President of the Republic. He is the son

of the celebrated advocate who supported the *coup d'état* of the 18th of Brumaire. An advocate himself and an active deputy, he is one of our best friends. Louis Napoléon has made a good stroke in bringing him forward as his second in command. Besides, he is a friend of his boyhood.

\* \* \*

*January 30th.*—Grand dinner at the Minister of the Interior's, Marrast, Molé, Berryer, Hugo, Changarnier, and Bugeaud, who were near the Prince at M. Falloux's, find themselves near him again at M. Faucher's. But other well-known names were there : MM. de Montalembert and de Rémusat, Mérimée, Meyerbeer, and Mignet. The Prince (who has written so much, albeit mainly on technical subjects) is known to be a friend of literature and the arts.

I listened to what these great men said. Dare I confess that they did not all shine in conversation at dinner? Berryer, with oratorical voice and gestures, speaks as if he were lecturing the Assembly from the rostrum. Victor Hugo makes ponderous jokes, and Marrast is as common-place as a bunch of turnips. Faucher is too full of himself, while Meyerbeer seems to think of nothing but money. I heard Victor Hugo whisper to Mignet :

“Of all musicians, Meyerbeer is the one who knows best how to get *colour* in his compositions—the colour of his money.”

Mignet looked as if he didn't understand the joke, obvious as it is.

*February.*—During these last few days the Prince has been paying off some of his debts : on the 9th inst. Laity, Persigny, and Conneau were appointed Knights of the Legion of Honour ; Montauban was made Officer of the Order, and Vaudrey Commander. Persigny had already been nominated as aide-de-camp, and Mocquard as leader of the Cabinet. Then comes the bestowal on Vaudrey of the governorship of the Louvre and the Tuileries, while that of the Château of Saint-Cloud is given to Laborde.



My thoughts go back to Arenaberg, Strassburg, Boulogne. These friends have risked their heads, and have gained their reward. Is it not just, is it not human nature? What king, what emperor, minister, leader of any movement whatsoever, what patron, director, starosta, pacha or khedive, what bey, caliph, or khan, would not act in the same way? There have been complaints of favouritism. I should like to know what government, on coming into power, would not favour such and such a devoted adherent! Did not Napoleon I. place crowns on the heads of his brothers? Have not kings created their sons—even their bastards—dukes and princes? Why, did not the Frankish kings carve out with the sword from the soil of Gaul estates for their devoted dependents?

A truce to hypocrisy and self-righteousness! Nothing is more natural than to say "Thank you" to any one who has done you a service. One would be a sneak not to do so.

*March 8th.*—Met at Pagnerre's a certain Louis Gallin, a very old man, who knew Isabey and told me the following anecdote:

One day in winter, at the height of the Terror, a short time after the death of Marie Antoinette, as Isabey, who was still a young man, was musing in his room, filled with horror at those dreadful times, two cautious knocks sounded on his door.

He was warming his fingers at the stove before setting to work, for it was early in the morning.

"Come in," said he in surprise and some anxiety.

The door opened, and a woman enveloped in a black cloak entered. Isabey trembled.

"You are Isabey, the painter?" asked the unknown lady.

"Yes, madam; what do you desire?"

"I want you to paint my portrait."

"I am at your service, madam."

"Yes, but now, at once."

"The deuce! Are you in such a hurry as all that?"

"It is not *I* who am in a hurry, but the guillotine. I



am on the list of suspects. I shall certainly be condemned to-morrow. I have children : I want to leave them my portrait. Will you take it at once? ”

Isabey accepted, and made a rapid sketch, one of his best. The unknown lady paid him, took the portrait, and disappeared, never to be seen by him again, leaving the painter filled with indescribable emotion.

\* \* \*

*March* 1849.—The electoral strife is at its height, in view of May 13th at the Élysée. Mysterious consultations are the order of the day. I am drawing up electioneering programmes ! I scribbled a circular a few days ago which appeared under the signature of Aristide Ferrer. In it I affirm that we shall emerge from our misfortunes, our troubles and confusion, only through the instrumentality of a Napoleonic Legislative Assembly.

This circular, addressed to the artisans and peasants, urged them to require from their candidates a declaration of their devotion to the family of Napoleon, which alone is capable of establishing a permanent government. I have since sketched out another circular, advising them to choose new men, capable of new measures, capable, to put it quite frankly, of demanding universal suffrage, and an elective and decennial Empire.

The Prince-President is delighted with these appeals, which he gets me to draw up, though he revises them, preferring not to write them in the first instance lest his handiwork should be detected ; but he likes them to express his own ideas nevertheless. As to what is in his mind there is no doubt. He wants the Republic to be succeeded by a régime under which he rules as Prince for ten years. He wants a revival of the Empire, the solution desired by a majority of the country.

\* \* \*

*April* 1849.—I have been told of the following conversation between Pius VII. and Cardinal Consalvi at the time of the first Napoleon's fall :

Pius VII. : “ The eagle has got his wings broken at last.”

Consalvi: "Of the brood hatched by Madame Mère, he was the only one that mattered. *He* clapped in the cage, there is nothing more to be feared."

Pius VII.: "Excuse me, there remains Queen Hortense."

Consalvi: "A woman!"

Pius VII.: "Who will breed another Napoleon."

\* \* \*

*May 4th.*—Celebration of the anniversary of the proclamation of the Republic in the Place de la Concorde.

*May 5th.*—Anniversary of the death of Napoleon I. Mass celebrated at the Invalides. Acclamations everywhere. When the Prince visited the Emperor's tomb, all the officers knelt. Many of them, veterans, had donned their old uniforms which they wore in the days of the great wars. It was a moving spectacle. The shadow of the Imperial eagle hovered over the vault.

*May 6th.*—In the middle of the banquet given at the Hôtel de Ville arrives the news that the French army has just been repulsed from the walls of Rome. Just a subject for light talk between the courses!

One of these days I will collect together my notes on this Roman question. It is certain that in the depths of my heart I am with the Republicans against the Assembly, even against the President, who is forced by circumstances to follow the movement of public opinion; but I believe that he, too, in the depths of *his* heart, like me, deploras this course of events which places him in such violent contradiction to his former actions.

\* \* \*

*A word on Changarnier.*—Changarnier amazes and irritates me. He is surrounded, flattered, spoiled, and carries his head high in consequence, thinks himself indispensable, a saviour, a god. The Prince has made him a Grand Officer of the Legion of Honour, though he knows all the time the opinions which this bedizened gentleman holds concerning him. I have been told of intolerable

things he has said and done, and our friend the Prince is really too kind to the fellow. Changarnier ridicules him to every comer :

"He is a gadder after plots and adventures," says he. "The Republic is a woman. He makes love to her, and then, after she has borne him the child called 'Imperialist Majority,' he will desert her."

And he makes no bones about adding :

"But when that times comes, you will find *me* on the spot ! The moment he begins to play pranks, I shall have him arrested and hauled off to Vincennes."

If you ask him to be more definite, he replies :

"I have a plan, yes ; but it is not to place on the throne this mountebank, this Thomas Diafoirus."

He even tries to be funny, and says of Louis Napoléon :

"He is a melancholy parrot. . . ."

Vain and presumptuous, Changarnier pretends to make excuses for the Prince, mocks at what he calls his "intellectual poverty." "He talks of extinguishing poverty. . . . Let him begin by suppressing the poverty of his own brain," and so on.

Our friend the Prince knows it all. He smiles and—waits.

\* \* \*

It is very true that Louis Napoléon is infinitely resourceful. One may say of him, "To retire in order to advance is the sum-total of his tactics."

He combines energy with tact. He conceals his iron will beneath an apparent indecision which puts all the advantage on his side. He does not crush obstacles, but turns them aside. He takes a step backwards when he cannot advance and patiently awaits the opportune moment, often unexpected by his opponents, for taking two steps forward. He juggles with the different parties. He is a profound psychologist.

Well ! is all this a crime ? Does virtue consist in clumsiness ? And the other side ? the other side ? what of them ?

\* \* \*



*May 8th.*—To-day was laid the first stone of the Cité Ouvrière in the Rue Rochechouart. We do well to interest ourselves in the workmen, the humble, the poor. And I prefer a man without genius who creates a Workmen's Quarter to ten Proudhons multiplied by ten Fouriers who live in the world of dreams.

The great thing is, not to make suggestions for a perfect state of society, but to effect a practical improvement in existing imperfections.

\* \* \*

*May 12th.*—The elections take place to-morrow. The atmosphere is stormy. There is a rumour of a *coup d'état*. It is certain that the Prince meditates one. It seems that the whole country demands it of him. He is hesitating. At any rate, no order has been given on this subject (so far as my knowledge goes), nor has any meeting to decide the matter taken place.

\* \* \*

*May.*—The Army is a cause of great anxiety to Louis Napoléon, and with good reason. He has already held several reviews. He is waiting until the soldiers acquiesce entirely in the new situation. He has visited the barracks of the Luxembourg, made a detailed inspection of the camp, stripped the beds, tasted the soup. He has made a special arrangement with the director of the panorama of the battle of Eylau so that the garrison of Paris may visit it. On April 22nd he distributed colours to the National Guard of the Seine-et-Oise. On the 29th he visited the training-school of the Legion of Honour at Saint-Denis. On the 30th he was in the Aube to repeat the ceremony of the 22nd. He was received with acclamation everywhere. The Bishop of Troyes embraced him. The veterans of the Empire wept with emotion. . . . Ah! the Empire . . . everybody is expecting it.

The opposition journals ask in vain: "Where is the Emperor who is to revive the Empire? Bonapartism is dead, its life has been its death. It is only in the

'Invalides' that you will find Bonapartists." Vainly does the *Liberté* exclaim: "To call on Bonapartists is not to call on the living, but to conjure up ghosts." In vain does the *Démocratie* wax witty: "All that we possess of the Consulate to-day consists of the nine letters which form the name Bonaparte." And the *Peuple*: "In 1825 Bonapartism was not an idea, but a sentiment. In 1848 it was not an idea, but a name. To-day it is neither an idea nor a sentiment, it is a hypocrisy." Yes, they are all blinding themselves in vain; if they are blinded, it is because too fierce a sun has dazzled their eyes.

On May 15th we started a new journal, the *Dix-Décembre*: all of us who are concerned in it being true fighting friends of the Prince—Abbatucci, Perrot, Belmontet, Piat, Briffault, Conneau, Persigny, Exelmans, Laity, Laborde, Vaudrey, Langlois, Montholon, Widomski, Ornano. . . . I amuse myself with scribbling in it articles unsigned or with the signature "Bataille," side by side with those of the Abbé Coquereau, the Comte de Saint-Georges, and General Rémond.

\* \* \*

*May 21st.*—To-day a grand review of 45,000 men on the Champ de Mars. Louis Napoléon was greeted with louder acclamations than ever. I saw the cavalry rising in their stirrups, brandishing their sabres, and roaring: "Down with the Reds! Vive Napoléon!" I saw the crowd literally drunk with enthusiasm. The Prince in General's uniform looked every inch the Emperor. The people saw in him an Emperor. France *knows* herself to be on the eve of having an Emperor.

Shall I confess the truth? Ten days ago I did not think I could assert what were Louis Napoléon's exact intentions in that respect. To-day I seriously believe that he dreams of satisfying the Nation, now mastered by his prestige. We have talked, in the greatest secrecy, of the possibility of a revival of the Empire. Our friends are ready—the same, or nearly so, as formerly—



the comrades of Strassburg and Boulogne, the faithful few of last year, who have more confidence than ever in Napoleon's lucky star.

\* \* \*

*End of May.*—What stormy scenes in the Chamber, and no wonder!

Crémieux refers to an article written by Considérant, in which it is affirmed that a *coup d'état* is imminent.

Considérant replies that he is warning the country—that it is his right, nay, his duty to do so.

Pierre Bonaparte calls Considérant a liar, and swears the President has never a notion of conspiring against the Republic.

General Bedeau sneers :

"You are discussing the impossible ; the discussion is absurd and unseemly."

Some one shouts :

"What about the 18th of Brumaire !"

"A new Assembly has just been elected," replies Bedeau. "A *coup d'état* at this moment would be an act of sheer folly."

"Folly, perhaps ; but there are always fools," shouts Charras.

"And what about Strassburg ?" interrupts Lagrange, and goes on : "Besides, has not Changarnier already violated the Assembly's orders and threatened to violate the Constitution itself ?"

Barrot starts up :

"To accuse the meanest of the citizens of these projects would be a crime. Then what is it when you accuse the first citizen of all ? It is to hurl insult in his face and to strike a blow at his honour."

"General Bonaparte took oaths, too," shouted a member.

Ledru-Rollin puts in :

"General Bedeau has used the term 'acts of folly.' There are plenty of them committed in the world. There were two in 1836 and in 1840. Why should not M. Bonaparte commit another in 1849 ?"



"It is unpardonable to call the man elected by six million votes a fool," declares Ernest de Girardin.

"Excuse me ! his advisers have condemned him for that fact," says Étienne Arago mockingly.

"Order ! Order !"

"When we ask you to reassure us," bursts out Ledru-Rollin, "you reply: 'We are on the watch.' You watch, but you do not see!"

So here we have M. Odilon Barrot charged with incurable blindness. For a change, a vote of thanks to the National Guard is passed on the 26th. Finally, Marrast, in the last minute of the last sitting, winds up with :

"You are transmitting to posterity a Constitution which should serve as a pattern and a protection to all powers no less than to all rights. In your name I express the most fervent wish that this last and final measure may inspire all parties with the respect due to the work of the Constituent Assembly. Woe to those who would attempt to violate it !"

Brave words blown to the winds of heaven !

\* \* \*

*May 1849.*—The new Assembly threatens to be even more stormy than the last. Here is the list of parties. Of the 700 members, more or less, there are :

500 Conservatives, of whom 200 are Legitimists ;

130 Socialists ;

70 Republicans.

The majority, then, is not Republican. But it is not agreed on the question of the restoration of the Monarchy. This is our salvation. For we are not numerous, it must be confessed.

"The elections have turned out far less well than I hoped," said the President to me, somewhat anxiously. "What a curious situation ! The country is for me, and its representatives against me."

"How can that happen ?" asked some one.

"It is quite easy to understand," explained Persigny. "Yes, the country is for you, Prince, but one of the bad

sides of universal suffrage is that people vote for men and not for measures. It is a question of persons rather than of principles. A man is elected, be he legitimist, republican, or democrat, for a thousand private reasons—interest, neighbourhood, influence, and not for reasons of State."

"Yes," concluded the Prince, "it is just on that account that I put all my faith in the *plébiscite*."

\* \* \*

*First Sitzings of the Legislature.*—For the moment all is calm. The following is the composition of the new Ministry :

Presidentship and Justice : Odilon Barrot ;

Interior : Dufaure ;

Foreign Affairs : de Tocqueville ;

War : Ruhlière ;

Marine : de Tracy ;

Public Instruction : de Falloux ;

Public Works : Lacrosse ;

Agriculture and Commerce : Lanjuinais.

Drouyn de Lhuys, Faucher, and Buffet, it will be seen, have disappeared. In their places we have Tocqueville, Lanjuinais, and Dufaure.

\* \* \*

*Undated.*—It seems that Thiers already possessed claims to a knowledge of the art of riding. He rode a horse named "Jata," and people poked fun at him, if one may judge by this paragraph from a newspaper of that day which I have found accidentally in a book :

"Jata is M. Thiers's horse, as Xanthus was the horse of Achilles, as Bucephalus was the charger of Alexander the Great, as Bayard was the mount of the four Aymons, as Rosinante was the steed of Don Quixote.

"Jata, who is about as large as a leveret and affects a *café au lait* colour, made his appearance between his master's legs for the first time on the first of March ; at this period Madame Dosnes used to feed him with sugar, M. Boilay, of the *Constitutionnel*, called him 'cousin,' and Louis Véron the doctor paid him frequent visits."

Jata appreciated all these honours and displayed great pride when the President of the Council was on his back. One day, when a riot of the carpenters had occurred on the Boulevard Saint-Martin, M. Thiers insisted on riding through the scene of the tumult. Accordingly he mounted Jata and rode as far as the Theatre near the Porte Saint-Martin between two rows of a hundred thousand curious spectators. But, at sight of this little man planted astraddle on a horse even smaller than himself, a burst of Homeric laughter resounded among the crowd. The outbreak was quelled, without any need of legal process or of the use of firearms.

\* \* \*

*June.*—Tumultuous scenes disgrace the Assembly daily. For what reason? Because the intermediary parties have disappeared. The election of Dupin the elder to the Presidency clearly proves this. He obtained 444 votes, against 182 for Ledru-Rollin and 76 for Lamoricière; in the same way Baroche has been nominated for the Vice-Presidency by 406 votes against 152 for Félix Pyat. This proves that the *Mountain* is going to extremes and that the Conservatives no longer acquiesce in the appointment of moderate Republicans. The debates, too, are disturbed by interruptions, interpellations, and loud cries. What a bear-garden!

*Undated.*—I learn to-day a surprising thing, which nobody knows of and which I must confide only to this diary, for I came upon it quite by accident. Dissatisfied with the attitude of M. de Lesseps, our delegate at Rome, the Council of Ministers have telegraphed a formal disavowal of his action and his immediate recall. At the same time, express orders have been sent to General Oudinot to take possession of Rome at all costs and with the shortest delay possible. At the same time authorization has been sent to General Vaillant to assume supreme command of the army in case of any hesitation on the part of the Commander-in-Chief.

\* \* \*



*June 11th.*—Cholera rages everywhere. Yesterday there were 680 deaths.

*Monday, June 12th.*—The business with Rome is causing severe attacks on the Government and some disturbance. Ledru-Rollin put a question yesterday. There were some fine oratorical displays. "Your foreheads are stained with blood," he cried. "The Constitution has been violated. We will defend it by every possible means, even by arms!"

I regret the Prince's attitude in regard to the Roman affair; but when I saw the *Mountain* to-day accusing the President and the Ministry, I voted with the "Noes," and I adhere to the party which stands for order and the national dignity.

I have collected particulars of these Roman incidents in the form of an historical sketch.<sup>1</sup> My opinions will be found there—logically, sincerely, in the name of our ideas in 1831. I am against the Pope. Politically speaking, I can only be on the side of the Prince. . . . We are threatened with an exciting day to-morrow.

*Midnight.*—Ferrer brings me the details of to-day's sitting. The "Clubbists" prepared the agitation. The propaganda of the central committee of the Socialists is unremitting, effective, and serious. It attacks even the Army. A meeting held in the Rue du Hasard has decided that Ledru-Rollin should give the signal for the movement by his interpellation to-day.

"What need is there even to put a question?" he cried. "Are not the facts certain? Is it not admitted that M. de Lesseps has been recalled, and that the order to seize Rome has been sent? There remains only one thing to be done, namely, to draw up an indictment against the President and his Ministers for a formal violation of the Constitution."

Was he so far wrong? Barrot at once retorted: "Before answering our accusers, I may perhaps be allowed to ask them if they have themselves taken a resolution to abide loyally within legal limits? One does not appear before a judge protesting in advance against his verdict,

<sup>1</sup> Incorporated in chap. iv. below.

and a legitimate struggle must not be rendered abortive by violence."

And Barrot proceeded to make a full disclosure of the Government's action in regard to Rome ; but Ledru-Rollin repeated :

"The Constitution has been violated : we will defend it by every possible means, even by arms."

This was the expected signal. A furious outburst ensued ; the President vainly called for order. The closure was attempted. Crémieux, with a view to conciliating his opponents, proposes to order the cessation of hostilities. D'Adelsward declares that the Government ought to continue the policy of the Constituent Assembly, and invites the Ministry to conform to that policy. The only resolution adopted was that of the order of the day pure and simple.

And this order of the day, thus understood, means the announcement for to-morrow morning of Civil War.

## CHAPTER II

SUMMER OF 1849

Rising of June 13th—What the Baron d'Ambès saw from a window—Tactics of Changarnier—The cholera in Paris; the President visits the Hospitals—Death of General Bugeaud—Frédéric Kalkbrenner—The President's popularity in the provinces—Significant phrases in the Press—The Baron again in London; his impressions of public opinion there—Paris improvements begun—A pretty addition to the *Légende Napoléonienne*.

*Rising of June 13th.*—What a time we are passing through! The cholera has added itself to the political outbreak, and the blast of a twofold pestilence is sweeping through the town. Marshal Bugeaud was carried off the day before yesterday. The Prince paid him a visit some hours before his death.

"Ah! I am delighted to see you," sighed the dying man. "You have a great mission to fulfil. With the co-operation of other good men, you will save this country. For myself, I am departing, heartbroken not to have been judged by God to be worthy of helping you."

To-day, the horrors of fighting and bloodshed in the open streets. But at whose door lies the blame?

To-night the adherents of the *Mountain* have had the walls placarded with a monstrous proclamation which, to their disgrace, has been signed by a hundred and twenty-two revolutionaries. Ledru-Rollin—think of it, a Deputy!—called the people to arms from the very rostrum. What do these men mean? They say that the President has declared war on Rome without the consent of the Assembly, which is a lie. They say that France is employing her forces against the liberty of the people of



Rome. . . . Alas! yes, that is true . . . but must the blood of France flow because that of Italy flows? The one will not wash out the other! They say that the minority in the Assembly has no other resource but to appeal to the people, to the Army. It is a mistake. For the minority ought itself to respect the Constitution, otherwise we have disorder and anarchy. I am against the majority which committed an error in upholding Papal tyranny. But how should I not be against the minority which commits a crime in upholding the tyranny of the populace?

The outbreak was short and quickly suppressed, Changarnier at the head of his horse and foot mastering the barricades and assemblage at the Château d'Eau, and the troops seizing the Conservatoire des Arts et Métiers after an insignificant resistance—still it had all the character of a Revolution, inasmuch as Ledru-Rollin, at the aforesaid Conservatoire, ventured to proclaim the fall of Louis Napoléon and to set up a provisional government. His friends, the Fayolles, Vauthiers, Maignes, and Fargins, were arrested. He himself made his escape by the windows, a course which displayed more adroitness than courage. Just before sunset the Prince, accompanied by eight Generals and a squadron of lancers, rode along the length of the Boulevards, greeted everywhere by the acclamations of a crowd so dense that the cortège had to go slowly, at a foot's pace. At 6 o'clock he returned to the Élysée.

But I noticed a dreadful spectacle: as I found myself at a window that overlooked the Opera-house, I saw a barricade being formed with the utmost rapidity by the demonstrators in the Rue Lepelletier, who were hemmed in by the bayonets of the soldiers of the guard. A young man rushed forward and threw himself in front of the battalion shouting:

“You will not kill your brothers!”

The words were not finished when a bullet bowled him over like a hare. Poor victim of violent doctrines, of hunters after an impossible ideal, poor victim of Utopism—*your* victim, M. Ledru-Rollin, as much as or

the too zealous soldier who had the courage to pull his trigger !

The Government has taken care, in order to calm the effervescence as soon as possible, to vote (by 400 to 80) the placing of Paris in a state of siege, and authority to prosecute Ledru-Rollin and several others ; it is asserted that a vote will shortly be passed in the same way for the closing of the clubs, the suspension of several newspapers, and the restriction of the liberty of the Press.

I learn that there have been risings also in the provincial districts, but that they have proved as unsuccessful as that in the capital.

This is how Changarnier "works" a rising. He allowed the column of 20,000 demonstrators (headed by Etienne Arago) to form itself ; when the column, marching down from the Boulevards, had reached the Madeleine, he debouched from the Rue de la Paix and cut it in two, driving back one portion towards the church and the other to the Porte Saint-Denis, sweeping the pavements with his cavalry and emptying the side streets with his infantry and municipal guards, who were led by the Commissaries of Police. This is how Changarnier uses his scalpel.

How is it that the Revolutionaries do not perceive that every outbreak will be crushed by the Army so long as the army remains on the side of the Government ? And yet this reasoning is quite simple. A Revolution has no chance of success unless the Army is with the people. That is an accepted fact. And when the Army is on the side of the people there is a probability that the Revolution may be a just one, for it is then identical with the majority of the Nation. Should Louis Napoléon effect a *coup d'état* some day, there is a chance of its succeeding in *his* case, because he knows beforehand that he will have the soldiers on his side.

\* \* \*

*June.*—Still the horrible plague of cholera mowing down, mowing down the people.

The President, while attempts are being made to



overthrow him, while slanders and insults are heaped upon him, visits the hospitals—the Hôtel Dieu, Val-de-Grace, Salpêtrière, Saint-Louis, Beaujon. He bends over the beds of the dying, consoling them and promising help to their families. I made one of these mournful rounds with him. I saw the poor people weeping. Outside, they greet with acclamations the Prince, who has a heart of gold, whatever may be said of him. He fastened a cross of the Legion of Honour on the breast of one of the attendants of the sick, speaking to her a few words, superb in their simplicity, on the heroism of her humble duties. I heard the following conversation at a bedside :

“Ah ! Monsieur le Président, may God protect you and long preserve you to the people. . . . You will end by making everybody happy, but *I* shall not be there to see it !”

“Do not despair, my friend, one may get better of any and every disease, if it be the will of Providence.”

“No. . . . I feel that I am going to die. And I am leaving a young wife, without work, without resources.”

“I will go and give her assistance this very day.”

“Alas ! when that is exhausted. . . .”

“I will obtain employment for her.”

“We have two children, Monsieur le Président.”

“They shall want for nothing till they are of an age to work.”

“Ah ! thank you ! thank you ! now I can die, I have seen what a *good King* was. . . .”

The unhappy man was doubtless wandering in his mind.

\* \* \*

1849.—The cholera has just carried off Frédéric Kalkbrenner, a composer of overweening vanity, spoiled by fortune, but possessing genuine talent. His father directed the chorus at the Opera for seven years with distinguished success. Frédéric was an infant prodigy, like Mozart. At six years of age he played a concerto of Haydn's before the Queen of Prussia ; at eight he spoke German, French,



and Italian. Subsequently, he made enough money by his compositions to purchase the Château of Praslin and marry the daughter of General d'Estaing. Nourrit, the singer, was a frequent visitor at his house, and also the politicians Molé, Salvandy, Bixio, and Marrast. I only went there once, in his latter days, but that one visit enabled me to judge of his talent and of his insupportable garrulity. It is related that, on hearing of his somewhat sudden death, some one muttered :

"How annoyed poor Fritz will be, if the good God does not make him conductor of the celestial choirs !"

\* \* \*

*Summer, 1849.*—"France desires to be governed !" Such is the phrase on everybody's lips, such the appeal made explicitly or otherwise. Wherever the Prince goes, such is the prayer that reaches him under a thousand different forms of expression. His late visit to Normandy has enabled him to assure himself in this respect. At Elbeuf he was greeted with acclamations by twelve thousand workmen. At Louviers he could see his portrait in all the workshops. At Havre flowers were showered upon him. At Blois the President of the Chamber of Commerce called him "Saviour of the country." At Rennes he was implored "to defend the country against the madness of the anarchical party." At Amiens the streets along which he passed were strewn with flowers. It was one long triumph, a continuous ovation—let us say the word, a general appeal for "the advent of a chief."

\* \* \*

*August 1st, 1849.*—The Assembly is disturbed at the ovations with which the President is everywhere greeted. It sees in them (and *we*, still more !) the menace of a *coup d'état*. The scenes at Amiens especially have caused it uneasiness. The monarchist journals are quaking. The *Gazette de France* lately wrote : "A general rumour warns us to expect a sudden enthronement, an 18th of Brumaire, an eagle coming from Alsace and flying—as on the 20th of March—from steeple to steeple."

Well, well, gentlemen, it might well be that the eagle of St. Helena was a phoenix-eagle, arising from its ashes, or, if you like, an eagle that has been asleep for thirty years, and suddenly awakes to spread its wings in the French sky.

In our journal, the *Dix-Décembre*, we make no concealment of the meaning of the ovations accorded to the Prince, and this exasperates our opponents. They wish us to clear up the ambiguity of the situation. Never ! There is an ambiguity, certainly, but the advent of the Prince to the Empire will alone dispel it. For France is only waiting for a serious crisis to offer him the throne.

That is not the opinion of the *République*, which says :

“You may make a man an Emperor on his return from Aboukir or from Marengo, but not on his return from Chartres or Amiens.”

Patience ! There are other battle-fields than those of war for creating the ruler of a State. The fields where one strews flowers are as beautiful as the fields where blood flows. . . .

\* \* \*

*London, August 1849.*—I have come here for a few days on private business, and also in order to sound public opinion. I perceive the importance attached to the words of the man who once made his preparations here for the part he was about to play. The speech at Amiens has made a great impression.

“It is the initiation of an Imperialist movement that will certainly come to a head,” said the editor of *The Morning Chronicle* to me. “The suspension of the proceedings of the Assembly is regarded here as a proof of the existence of a *coup d'état*.”

“Oh ! come ! it is merely the ordinary recess.”

“They are spending it in manufacturing eagles for the troops.”

“What a tale !”

“And it is on the 15th, the anniversary of the birth of Napoleon the First. . . .”

# LE RETOUR DE L'AIGLE

CHANT NATIONAL

Musique de FRANK HITSZ.

Paroles de FRANZ RITZ.

AL PRIME LOI IN SARDIJA BONAPARTE

FRANCO

N'est-ce pas un songe un dieu ?  
N'est-ce pas un songe un dieu ?  
N'est-ce pas un songe un dieu ?

part 2  
Et ce bien l'Aigle de l'Empire  
Et ce bien l'Aigle de l'Empire  
Et ce bien l'Aigle de l'Empire

part 3  
De plus, et ses ailes plus, ses ailes  
De plus, et ses ailes plus, ses ailes  
De plus, et ses ailes plus, ses ailes

R. F. 1849

part 1  
Où n'y a plus de royaume plus  
Où n'y a plus de royaume plus  
Où n'y a plus de royaume plus

part 2  
Où n'y a plus de royaume plus  
Où n'y a plus de royaume plus  
Où n'y a plus de royaume plus

part 3  
Où n'y a plus de royaume plus  
Où n'y a plus de royaume plus  
Où n'y a plus de royaume plus

part 4  
Où n'y a plus de royaume plus  
Où n'y a plus de royaume plus  
Où n'y a plus de royaume plus

R. F. 1849

"LE RETOUR DE L'AIGLE": NAPOLEONIC SONG OF 1848, 1849.





"That Napoleon the Third will ascend the throne! You are going too fast."

"Louis Blanc, who is just now in London, wrote a month ago: 'When power fluctuates at random between a man and an Assembly, it may be regarded as certain that this Assembly carries with it a 10th of August and that this man has behind him an 18th of Brumaire.'"

"Louis Blanc going in for literature!"

"And Lamartine? He asserts that one fine morning they will go and fetch the President to make him into an hereditary Emperor."

"That's nothing! Lamartine does not believe that. He regards Louis Napoléon as an honourable man, loyal and just. He has written to that effect."

"No one is deceived, and you yourself . . . ?"

"Oh! I look on, I keep silence, and wait."

\* \* \*

*Date uncertain.*—You may abuse law and order as much as you please, it is they alone which breed prosperity. Immediately after the 13th of June, the Prince-President had exclaimed:—"Henceforth honest men shall rest secure and the dishonest shall tremble."

Accordingly, order, peace, and confidence having been re-established, business resumes its normal course. Especially worthy of note is the progress of public works and improvements. A walk through Paris is very enlightening in this respect. Decayed and ruined buildings are being demolished; palatial structures and solidly built houses are rising in every direction. New streets are being opened out, sewers are being laid down. The Rue des Écoles in the Quartier de l'Université is in course of construction, the Rue de Rivoli opened by Napoleon from the Place Louis XVI. to the Louvre is being prolonged to the Rue Saint-Antoine, opening up Paris from east to west by a magnificent sword-thrust, as it were. The Halles Centrales are begun, and this fabulous structure, destined to contain a provision-store for the entire capital, will be something really fairy-like. The Louvre, which two hundred years have failed to complete, is going to be

joined to the Tuileries. The underground water-supply is progressing and will soon form a formidable network of veins and arteries. Decidedly, we are working on a grand scale !

\* \* \*

*October.*—The Assembly, which resumed its sittings on the first of the month, continues to annoy the President, and to discuss his letter to Edgar Ney on the subject of the Roman question ; and we have seen the spectacle of Mathieu de la Drôme rising in his place and exclaiming :

“ You are angry with the President because he is greeted by the acclamations of the people. Well, then, you should forbid his being called Napoléon Bonaparte ! ”

To tell the truth, Napoléon Bonaparte is getting tired of all this rancour. He said to me frankly a day or two ago :

“ I begin to weary of the tutelage to which I am subjected by the Thiers and Changarniers, weary of the hostility of the Assembly, weary of Molé, even of Barrot. . . . I long to be free.”

*October 29th.*—Yesterday, at Saint-Germain-en-Laye, the President held a review of the National Guards of the Seine-et-Oise. Ovations, as usual. On his return occurred a trifling but pleasing incident : on his arrival at the Élysée, a woman threw herself in front of his carriage exclaiming amid her tears :

“ I want to see the President ! I want to see the President ! ”

After being questioned she was brought to the Prince, who inquired into her story. She implores mercy for her son, who is detained, unjustly as she declares, in the hulks at Belle-Isle. Louis Napoléon promises an inquiry, but begins by granting the request of the distracted mother, who goes away in great excitement and elation, repeating the happy news to every soul she meets.

These are the sort of stories that go to make up legend. And the Napoleonic legend is growing from day to day.



## CHAPTER III

### PARLIAMENTARY OPPOSITION

1849—1851

A surprise—Fall of the Odilon Barrot Administration—The new Ministry—Systematic organization of Bonapartism—Miss Burdett-Coutts at the Élysée—Anniversary of the Tenth of December—First number of the *Napoléon*—Project of a Bank for Loans of Honour—Income of the Prince-President augmented—Depopulation of the rural districts—Aphorisms of Napoleon—Ascent of the *Ville de Paris*—Baron d'Ambès on the future of Flying—Fall of Changarnier—Another Ministry—The question of Revision—Victor Hugo on the situation—No solution save a *coup d'état*.

*November 1st, 1849.*—Yesterday, a truly sensational surprise. The Prince-President has parted from his Ministers, and his explanatory message, sent to the Assembly, contained the following words :

“ For nearly a year I have given sufficient proofs of my abnegation to admit of no misunderstanding as to my real intentions. Without showing ill-will towards any individual or towards any party, I have allowed men of the most diverse views to co-operate in public business, but without obtaining from this combination of opinions the satisfactory results which I had hoped for. Instead of effecting a fusion between men of varying shades of thought, I have only secured a neutralization of forces. Unity of views and intentions has been shackled, and a conciliatory spirit mistaken for weakness of purpose : hardly had the dangerous disturbances in the streets been suppressed before we saw the old banners of party uplifted once more, the old rivalries aroused, and the country

alarmed by the dissemination of restlessness. Amid all this confusion, France, uneasy because she sees no steady direction of the affairs of the country, seeks for the guiding hand and the controlling will of him who was elected on December 10th. Now this will cannot make itself felt unless there exists a complete community of ideas, views, and convictions between the President and his Ministers, and unless the National Assembly itself associates itself with the national feeling of which the election of an Executive Power was the expression. December 10th was the triumph of a whole system. For the name of Napoleon constitutes in itself an entire programme. It stands for order, authority, religion, the well-being of the people at home; and abroad, for national dignity."

At last he has spoken out. I feared to see our friend plunge himself, by employing too much delicacy and sincerity, in the miry bog of feebleness. All of a sudden he draws himself up, plants his foot on the edge of the frogs' pool and says to the frogs :

"You are going to have a master. I took some of you as my advisers, being animated by an honest and Republican spirit. I see that that was a mistake, and that, to govern, one must be alone. I am going to govern."

Changarnier pulls a very long face. Changarnier used to say of the Prince that he was a "melancholy parrot."

You will see, my dear General, that the parrot bears a strange resemblance to an eagle. . . .

So, the thing is done. There is an end of equivocation. The Prince has shown that he intends no longer to submit to Thiers, or Berryer, or Molé, or Changarnier, that he will no longer play the game of M. de Chambord or of M. de Paris, that the time is over for pulling this way and that in political matters, that the hour for him to govern has arrived.

Oh ! certainly, this will not give pleasure. I hear already the howls of the Conservatives, the Democrats, the journals, white and red. So much the worse for

them, and for the Assembly, and for the former Ministry. . . .

\* \* \*

A new Ministry has been formed as follows :

War : General d'Hautpoul.  
 Interior : Ferdinand Barrot.  
 Justice : Rouher.  
 Foreign Affairs : de Rayneval.  
 Education : de Parieu.  
 Public Works : Bineau.  
 Agriculture : Dumas.  
 Finance : Fould.  
 Marine : Rear-Admiral Desfossés.

\* \* \*

*November.*—The President intends, henceforth, both to govern more personally and to organize Bonapartism on a more definite footing. His first care, accordingly, is to overhaul the high administrative departments. Two new chief magistrates have been appointed, as well as a new Chief of Police, Carlier, in place of General Rebillot. A serious propaganda is being organized, in which I am actively busying myself. It is evident that we are gradually drawing away from a Republic. Our opponents are not deceived, but what matter !

Persigny is denounced as one of the most ardent apostles of the era which is preparing. Pierre Bonaparte has proclaimed it from the rostrum. *I am lying low, but I know very well that Persigny, though he assumes all the responsibility, is not the only one who has to bear it. Only, Persigny talks too much. For myself, I am content to empty the overflow of my secrets into these pages. To them I voice my hopes (like King Midas, who could not contain himself), but nothing transpires outside, for I have a stout desk, and to this desk a good lock. Persigny does not write, but chatters. It is asserted that, being lately charged with a mission to Berlin, he made the following speech, which has been repeated—naturally :*



"I made him President in spite of himself, and it would not be wise for me to leave the capital before having made him, in spite of himself, Emperor."

If it is true he said this, nothing could be more tactless, or more false. I know Louis Napoléon at least as well as he does. And I say that Louis Napoléon acted in accordance with his own wishes. Persigny possesses a certain influence over the Prince, no doubt. But the influence which dominates him is still, and always has been, that of the Queen, his mother, who gave him a ring as a talisman which anchored in his heart the desire to reach a throne.

Be this as it may, the Prince's destiny fulfils itself from day to day. He makes speech upon speech, without ever repeating himself, although he always says the same things. Seldom has a man known so well how to drive in a nail thus, with little blows, blow upon blow, unceasingly. . . . Speech at the ceremony of the installation of magistrates at the Palais de Justice in response to the young deputy Rouher; speech at the grand manœuvres of cavalry at Versailles; speech to the industrial exhibitors on the day of the distribution of awards,—everywhere, with the greatest adroitness, he poses as an upholder of order and a man of wisdom, and knows how to make himself applauded by the whole of France.

\* \* \*

*November 20th.*—At the last big dinner at the Élysée Miss Burdett-Coutts was the object of much remark. She looked prettier than usual, and I believe that the Prince is decidedly desirous of marrying her and her fifty millions. But, that evening, it was no question of making love; the conversation all hinged upon politics. There were none but friends of the Prince present, and he assuredly heard, among the evidences of sympathy, evidences also of mistrust. At a certain moment, some one asked him :

"Well, Prince, what do they say?"

"They say," he replied, "that Sixtus V. has just

thrown away his crutches and is getting ready to become a great Pope."

M. X—— thinks it exorbitant that the President should have asked for the augmentation of salary, which was proposed by our friends to the Assembly.

"This President wants to be paid like a King!" he scoffs.

"If he does the work of a King, and has the prestige of one, why shouldn't he?" replied M. de Castelbajac.

\* \* \*

*December 11th.*—A banquet yesterday in commemoration of the other December 10th, that of the previous year. To-day a banquet at the Hôtel de Ville. A year already. . . . What a change there has been! Nothing but a continued ascent towards greater glory and power. Nothing but a growing misunderstanding, spite of banquets and messages, between the Assembly and its President, who gradually increases in power, dominates it, and will eventually put it out of existence.

\* \* \*

*January 6th, 1850.*—To-day appears the first number of a new journal, the *Napoléon*, the contributors to which are Léon Laya, Lherminier, Romieux, d'Alaux, Bruguet, Monclar, Reybaud, Briffault, Lafont . . . and myself, when I choose . . . and—must it be confessed?—the Prince himself, he and I under any signatures . . . even those of our *confrères*. In every case we shall revise the majority of the articles. The first has created a sensation!

*February.*—The Prince has spoken to me to-day of a scheme, greatly to his credit, for the establishment of a "Bank for Loans of Honour." How true it is that the President is full of democratic intentions, that he often dreams of the amelioration of the lot of the humbler classes. And this scheme is a proof of his solicitude. He wants the labouring classes to have, in case of need, a source of help. He would like to be able to lend money to them, on their word of honour, without interest;



and this is how he proposes to proceed : the capital, to be furnished by voluntary contributions, would be placed provisionally at the disposal of families when in a situation of difficulty. The father would come, accompanied by his wife and children, and make his request to the directors, and would bind himself on oath before them all to repay the advance made. This debt of honour would be entered in the ledgers, and then two large books would be opened before the borrower, the one containing the names of those who had fulfilled their promises, the other the names of those who had been defaulters. Doubtless, when confronted with these registers of honour and bad faith, the ancient French loyalty would triumph, and the fear of public loss of esteem, combined with the obligation of duty, would act as a substitute for the enforcement of legal penalties. The balance-sheet of this novel institution would thus combine the moral and the material. I admire the noble spirit that has conceived this project, but its ingenuousness makes me smile.

\* \* \*

*March.*—On the 26th inst. our friend Henri de la Rochejaquelein demands that the nation should be consulted, by a *plébiscite*, on the form of government. In concert with all of us “Elyséens,” he sets the trap. Should the Assembly fall into it, we have Louis Napoléon on the throne, for it means the proclamation of the Empire.

The Assembly does *not* fall into it, which means that the Assembly is not truly representative of the Nation.

And yet, what a perfect and superior form of universal suffrage the *plébiscite* is ! The business of drawing up laws might be the prerogative of the Legislative Body, but the passing of those laws ought to be the prerogative of the entire Nation, who thus would accept them, reject or modify them before having to submit to them ; and that would be justice.

\* \* \*

*May 19th.*—The *Napoléon*, the *Constitutionnel* (of



which Véron is chief editor), the *Moniteur du soir*, which are our official journals, are disturbing the digestions of our opponents. And yet, what efforts the Prince-President makes to keep on good terms with all parties, while still retaining his personal line of conduct !

The proof of this is that he consents to the project of a law for restraining the freedom of the Press, and is even affable towards Changarnier !

\* \* \*

*June 1850.*—Louis Napoléon is in need of money. His expenses increase in a manner that is rather alarming. Bounties and necessary rewards, and the indispensable outlay to maintain his exalted station. . . . He enjoys a salary of 1,200,000 fr., and now asks for 3,000,000 fr. I have got a petition signed by a certain number of the inhabitants to demand, in addition, that the President should be lodged at the Tuileries. I have had paragraphs inserted in the *Moniteur*, pointing out that the money paid to the Prince only passes through his hands to go to the relief of the unfortunate, of soldiers reduced to poverty, to the encouragement of artists, artisans, and savants. I have had this demand backed up by the *Dix-Décembre*, the *Pays*, the *Débats*, the *Constitutionnel*. And we have triumphed . . . almost. He has been granted 2,160,000 francs.

\* \* \*

*August 1850.*—I have already commented on the "Bank for Loans of Honour" and some other tentative democratic efforts of the Prince-President. He is full of schemes of this kind, and haunted by anxiety for the popular welfare. Just lately, again, he placed at the disposal of twenty schoolmasters the sum necessary (and yet people reproach him, and he has to beg for augmentations of his official salary !) for hiring four acres of land each, with a view to instilling in children a liking for agricultural pursuits, and so bring "back to the land" the youthful population which is all too readily attracted by the towns.

(*Note added subsequently.*)—I have read the foregoing remark after an interval of thirty-five years, and am alarmed at the rapid progress of the depopulation of the country districts, which had already been foreseen by the Emperor when he was still only President of the French Republic. The towns have more and more attracted, fascinated, and snapped up the country folk. And each year sees an increase of urban agglomerations. There may be some economic fatality in this phenomenon; but at least one cannot reproach Napoleon with not having anticipated this danger and offered a remedy for it.

\* \* \*

Maxims of Napoleon gathered at random :

A Sovereign should never make a promise which he is unwilling to perform.

The important thing in politics is to reach one's end ; the means do not matter.

Kings are never without people ready to find fault. I have never permitted criticism. You require a doctor to heal the fever, not to write a satire upon it. If you have a remedy, give it ; if not, hold your tongue.

*October 6th.*—I was in the enclosure of the Hippodrome when MM. Godard Brothers, Turgan, Deschamps, de Nicolaï and Max Maxen ascended, at about half-past five, in their balloon, the *Ville de Paris*. And I took pleasure in dreaming of these flying-machines and of their future.

This century has seen the creation of railways, which promise to have a prodigious future when France shall be furrowed with roads on which will glide light and rapid trains carrying passengers and goods with an astonishing celerity.

Will this century see balloons fulfilling an equally brilliant destiny, or is this honour reserved for the century to follow ? So far only the balloons have yielded any results. I read in a curious article that some experts or visionaries had been trying experiments with what should rather be called flying-machines. Bacon, Léonard the



painter, and Lalande have studied the question on paper, which is less dangerous than making experiments in the air, like that Dante, of Péronne, who broke his limbs, or like that Benedictine, Malmesbury by name, who tried to follow the description given by Ovid of the attempt of Icarus, and smashed in his ribs ; or, again, like that Marquis de Bacqueville who, in the time of Louis XIV., jumped from his house situated on the quays and smashed himself on a washing-boat, etc. . . . They say that in 1812 a Viennese of the name of Dagen (or Degen) tried a kind of balloon with wings . . . since which the attempts have been abandoned. It is only machines capable of being steered that count for anything.<sup>1</sup> We must succeed in controlling the currents of the wind. What progress we shall have made when balloons are used as wagons, and the conquest of the air, like that of land and water, shall have been achieved !

\* \* \*

January 1851.—The struggle has been a severe one, but Changarnier is at last demolished. Since the 2nd his position had been threatened. However, replying to a question put by Prince Napoléon Bonaparte concerning an article in the *Patrie*, Changarnier had come off triumphantly with an ovation of applause. This constituted a blow to the dignity of the President, who was determined to crush the General by depriving him of his double command. The Prince unbosoms himself to Barrot, who recognizes how abnormal the General's position has become, but sees only one possible way to diminish his importance, namely, to render him unnecessary by appointing a Minister of Safety. The Prince was annoyed and summoned the chief members of the Chamber to him, and declared that there was now no reason for the military command with which Changarnier was invested, and that he (the Prince) would accord to the Assembly any

<sup>1</sup> Even at the date of the death of the Baron d'Ambès the extraordinary and marvellous flights of the Wrights and Blériots had not yet been attempted. Otherwise, the conscientious writer of these memoirs would not have failed to have added one of those "subsequent notes" which are often of such interest.



guarantees they might desire, but that he wanted to check the growing influence of Changarnier. A bitter discussion followed without result. The General continued to defy the Prince in his journal, the *Assemblée Nationale*, and on the 10th the President summarily dismissed him without going through any other formality.

And nobody in France was the least disturbed by the occurrence.

*January 24th.*—The Prince has sent a message to the Assembly, deploring the continued want of agreement and confidence, and announcing that, finding it impossible to form a durable Ministry from either the majority or the minority in the Assembly, he has determined to appoint a provisional Government composed of men not definitely attached to any Party.

This new Ministry is composed as follows :

Justice : M. de Royer, Procurator-General of Paris.

Foreign Affairs : M. Brenier.

War : General Randon.

Marine : Admiral Vaillant.

Interior : M. Vaisse.

Public Works : M. Magne.

Agriculture : M. Schneider.

Education : M. Guiraud.

Finance : M. de Germiny.

Colourless names, as may be seen. People are exclaiming on all sides that it is a Ministry of docile democrats, a squad of shopkeepers. . . . Lamartine alone defends the President's selection : " They are men," he says, " of modesty and merit."

In truth, this is the finest trick which the President could have played upon the Assembly. It has now got the sort of Ministry which it deserves to have, and I recall this *mot* of M. Bourzat's, after the House had proceeded to the orders for the day pure and simple :

" And now he can come with a horsewhip and dismiss us like lackeys."

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*February—May 1851.*—The Assembly has refused a

fresh demand from the Prince-President for funds. Whereupon the *Pays* wants to open a subscription, so that France may offer directly what the Assembly refuses to its Chief Magistrate. Very cleverly, the latter has begged the journal to desist from its generous action. And the applauding Nation ranges itself on the side of the victim of the Executive Power, against whom it is henceforth in open strife—until when?

\* \* \*

June 1851.—A million and a half signatures have been received in favour of revision. The very natural fear of giving their signatures publicly has deprived us of at least an equal number of supporters. The will of the Nation is clear. This is admitted even by the most hostile of the newspapers. Lamartine supports us in the *Conseilleur du Peuple*.

The Prince continues, unperturbed, to travel over France, to let himself be seen and received with acclamations.

One Ministry in January—another in April—and a third in prospect after the discussion on the revision. Such is the present régime. No continuity in plan or in business; *no Head*. A Head is what we must have.

\* \* \*

July 20th.—The debate on the revision opened at last on the 14th, and was only concluded yesterday. And this is what has happened:

The Monarchists have demanded it in order to render possible the legal proclamation of the Monarchy.

The Bonapartists have demanded it in order to render possible the immediate re-election of Louis Napoléon.

The Republicans have opposed it to render impossible the return of the Monarchy or the triumph of the Prince-President.

The motion for Revision has been rejected by a majority of 278. Thiers and Rémusat voted against.

What animation on this question of the revision!



In the committees of the Assembly, since the beginning of June, there have been heated contests.

"The revision is demanded by the whole of France," said the Comte de Molé.

"Louis Napoléon is the danger!" cried Thouret.

"I shall vote for revision," declared M. de Tocqueville, "because, rightly or wrongly, the Nation is in favour of it."

"I shall vote against it," replied M. Quinet, because it will only profit Bonapartism, which, at bottom, is but a twofold snare, to entrap the Monarchists as well as the Republicans."

At last the debate was started on the 14th inst. After several speakers had addressed the Assembly, most of them expressing themselves as opposed to revision, M. Victor Hugo caused a considerable uproar by his tirades, which, though they did not lack eloquence, were sufficiently insulting both to the Monarchy and to Louis Napoléon.

"Legitimacy is impossible; the Monarchy of divine right and principle is dead; but the other kind of Monarchy, that of glory and empire, is not only possible, but necessary. . . . Such is the language which they address to us. . . . The Monarchy of glory, do you say? Come, you have the glory; show it us! Come, your glory, where is it? I am searching for it. I look around me. Of what is it composed, what are its elements? What have I before me? What have we before our eyes? All our liberties entrapped, one after another, and throttled; universal suffrage betrayed, surrendered, mutilated; socialistic programmes tending to a jesuitical policy; government, nothing but one vast intrigue—a plot, history will say perhaps . . . a sort of unprecedented understanding which gives to the Republic the Empire as its aim, and which bands about a hundred and fifty thousand paid functionaries into a kind of Bonapartist freemasonry in the midst of the Nation; every measure of reform postponed or scouted; taxes unfair and burdensome to the people maintained or re-established; a state of siege weighing down five Departments, Paris and



Lyons placed under surveillance; the refusal of amnesty, the voting for deportation; groans in the *Kasbah* of Bona, tortures at Belle-Isle; casemates where they will not leave the mattresses to rot, but where they allow *men* to rot! . . . the Press hunted down, juries packed, too little justice and much too many police; poverty at one end of the social scale, anarchy at the other; arbitrariness, restriction, iniquity! Abroad, the corpse of the Roman Republic . . . the gibbet, that is to say; Austria trampling on Hungary, Lombardy, Milan, and Venice; Sicily, a prey to fusillades; the hope reposed by oppressed Nationalities in France destroyed; the bonds of intimacy between peoples broken; everywhere rights trampled underfoot, in the north as well as in the south, at Cassel as at Palermo; a secret coalition of Kings waiting only its opportunity; our diplomacy dumb, I might almost say acting in complicity; everywhere cowardice confronted by insolence; Turkey left without support against the Czar and forced to abandon the exiles; Kossuth languishing in a cell in Asia Minor: here is the condition in which we find ourselves! France droops her head, Napoléon shudders with shame in his tomb, and five or six thousand rascals shout: "Vive l'Empereur!" Is this, I ask, is this what you call your glory?

"Now, I should like to say a word or two about your Empire. [*Groans and interruptions.*] Groan, gentlemen, as much as you please, but let us have no equivocations. You say to me, no one is dreaming of an Empire! Then what do the shouts of 'Vive l'Empereur' mean? I will ask you a simple question: Who pays them for doing this?

"No one is dreaming of an Empire, you understand! Then what is the meaning of those words used by General Changarnier, those allusions to 'debauched pretorians' which were applauded by you? What is the meaning of those words of M. Thiers, equally applauded by you: 'The Empire is made'? What is the meaning of this ridiculous petition for the prolongation of power? What does prolongation mean, if you please? It means a Consulate for life. And what does a Consulate for life

lead to? To Empire! Gentlemen, there is a plot, I tell you. I have the right to search into it: I will do so. Come, let us drag all this out into the open air!

"France must not be taken by surprise and find herself some fine morning with an Emperor, without knowing why!

"An Emperor! Let us discuss the claim for a moment. What! because we had a man who won the battle of Marengo, and who reigned in consequence, do *you* want to reign—you, who have only won the battle of Satory?

(*M. Ferdinand Barrot*.—"He has been winning battles for the last three years—those of order against anarchy.")

*Victor Hugo*.—"What! because, ten centuries ago, Charlemagne, after a glorious reign of forty years, let fall to the ground a sceptre and a sword so unrivalled that nobody since has had the power or the audacity to touch them—and yet there have been, during the interval, men who bore the names of Philippe-Auguste, François I., Henri IV., Louis XIV.! What! because, a thousand years afterwards (for humanity requires a period of a thousand years to reproduce such men) another genius arrived, who picked up that sword and that sceptre and towered above the Continent of Europe performing Titanic exploits the fame of which dazzles us to this day, who chained up Revolution in France and unchained it in the rest of Europe, who identified with his own name the world-famous names of Rivoli, Jena, Essling, Friedland, Montmirail! What! because, after ten years of glory almost fabulous in its grandeur, he, in his turn, has let fall, through exhaustion, the sceptre and the sword which had accomplished these colossal exploits, *you* come, *you* want to pick them up, as *he*, Napoleon, picked them up after Charlemagne, and grasp in your puny hands that gigantic sword and sceptre! What for? What! after Augustus, Augustulus! What! because we have had Napoleon the Great, we must have Napoleon the Little!

"To resume,—Gentlemen, I, like everybody else, like all of you, have had in my hands those journals, those Imperialist pamphlets—or *Cæsarist*, as they are styled





PIERRE BONAPARTE



NAPOLEON III.





to-day. An idea has struck me which I cannot refrain from communicating to this Assembly. What would that great soldier say who lies yonder in the Invalides, under whose shadow this party shelters itself, and whose name they invoke so often and so strangely? What would that Napoleon say who, in the midst of so many prodigious combats, marched eight hundred leagues from Paris to challenge the ancient Muscovite barbarism to the grand duel of 1812? What would that sublime spirit say who contemplated with horror the possibility of a Cossack Europe, and who, whatever his instinctive love of sovereignty, himself preferred a republican Europe—what would *he* say, if from his tomb he could see that his glorious and warlike Empire has to-day for its panegyrists, for its apologists, for its reconstructors, *whom?*—men who, in these our free and enlightened times, turn for support to the North in a despair which would be laughable if it were not so monstrous! men who, every time they hear pronounced the words Democracy, Liberty, Humanity, Progress, throw themselves flat on the ground in terror, and glue their ears to the earth to listen if they cannot hear at last the arrival of the Russian guns. . . .”

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July 28th.—The Assembly is prorogued, by 422 votes to 230, from August 10th until November 4th, after a statement from M. Manescau conclusive as to the rejection of all fears in respect of the *coup d'état*.

Louis Napoléon appears disturbed by the throwing out of the motion for revision.

He does not want to go against the wish of the General Councils, which are almost unanimously in favour of revision; nor against the wish of a large portion of the Assembly, which is in his favour; nor against the Nation, which by so many votes accords him its confidence. All this releases him from his oath. Will he throw down the frail barrier?

## CHAPTER IV

### OCCUPATION OF ROME

1848, 1849

The Baron d'Ambès as a serious historian—General reflections—The Revolution of 1848, a crisis in European history—Election of Pius IX.—Complications—The Pope flies to Gaëta—Attitude of France—Papal affairs a source of great embarrassment to Louis Napoléon—Official instructions—Part played by Cavaignac—Oudinot to the front—Mazzini, Garibaldi, Avezzana form a Triumvirate at Rome—Parliamentary opinion on the Roman expedition—Secret orders to M. de Lesseps—Siege and capture of the Eternal City—The Baron sums up results.

*August 1849.*—I wish to write here an abridged but clear account of the Italian question, giving certain details, and likewise a bird's-eye view from a distance, now that, as it seems, the matter has reached a conclusion.

The history of this question goes back two years at least, and is, indeed, entirely connected with the great revolutionary upheaval of 1848. For, undoubtedly, Europe has been shaken to its foundations in the last twelve months, and these events will leave their mark on history.

In Rome especially, the passions of the populace were incensed. The Pope had chosen first as his Minister Mamiani, who was obliged to resign, then Count Fabri, and then Count Rossi. The latter was caught between two fires : the slanders of the fierce democrats and the anger of the conservative Intransigents. On November 15th, 1848, though aware of the hatred which lay in wait for him, he attended the meeting of Parliament. On reaching the Piazza della Cancelleria, he was assailed by hooting and



hissing, and, as he entered the peristyle, he was stabbed in the throat by a dagger.

Revolution had set in in all its fury. The Quirinal was attacked the next day, Palma, one of the secretaries, assassinated, and the Palace taken by assault. The Pope vainly tries to temporize by making promises. Terror-struck and powerless, he has to leave Rome secretly, like a criminal. His flight took place on the evening of November 24th.

On the 25th, having taken shelter at Gaëta with the King of Naples, he issues a brief nominating a Commission to govern Rome in his absence. The Chamber refused to accept the nominations, and a Provisional Government of three members was appointed: Galletti, one of the Ministers, Corsini, a Senator, and the Mayor, Camerata. On December 26th an Assembly was constituted by universal suffrage, and, meeting on February 6th, 1849, proclaimed the downfall of the Pope as a temporal Sovereign, and a Roman Republic, entrusting the executive power to a Triumvirate, of which Mazzini, Armellini, and Saffi were now the members.

\* \* \*

And, during all these events, what was the attitude of France?

In August 1848 Charles Albert had in vain twice over requested Cavaignac to intervene. The latter assumed, in November, a protective attitude towards the Holy Father. It was not until the Presidency that a definite course was adopted.

On February 20th, Drouyns de Luys, replying for the Government to Ledru-Rollin, declared that we could no longer refrain from taking a part in Roman affairs.

But on which side? In favour of the Pope, such was the opinion of the Government. The questioner expressed indignation at the idea of the Republic aiding the Papacy by force, and declaring itself against liberty.

Here, I must confess, I am with our opponents and against the Roman tyranny, and I am certain that Louis Napoléon, at the bottom of his heart, does not approve of

his Ministers' action. What ugly things are brought about by the exigencies of policy! But the country appears to be with the Government. On April 16th, by 390 votes to 159, the Assembly passed a credit of 1,200,000 francs to defray the expense of our intervention.

It is true that this intervention was defined by Lamoricière with the following restrictions :

- (i) The necessity of preserving Liberal institutions.
- (ii) The necessity of preventing Austria from acquiring a preponderating influence in Italy, and with the Papacy.

The Papal autocracy a Liberal institution! To intervene to prevent intervention! Come! this cannot be meant to be taken seriously. . . . Well! well!

The Prince, at the bottom, is greatly annoyed. He remembers that he joined the "Carbonari," and was against the Papacy in 1831, and consequently on the side of the Liberals whom he is opposing to-day. Eighteen years ago he was guided by his natural feelings; to-day he is swayed by considerations of policy. He does not wish to displease either the Republicans in Rome, or the Pope.

Officially, MM. d'Harcourt and de Reyneval have received the following instructions :

*"The Pope must be restored to such a degree of independence and influence as are absolutely necessary to him for the accomplishment of his spiritual duties.*

*"At the same time the population of the States of the Church must be protected from the detestable régime which has been the prime cause of all the late calamities."*

\* \* \*

To go back. The Republic had been proclaimed in Florence after the Revolution of February 18th, 1848. In March Charles Albert resumed hostilities. But his Sardinians, overwhelmed by numbers, were defeated at Mortara and at Novara, where the King displayed such heroism that he purposely kept himself within range of the enemy's fire. Nay more, fearing lest he himself should prove an obstacle to success, he abdicated in favour



of his son, Victor Emmanuel, Duke of Savoy, and went to die in Portugal four months later, sorrowful, but resigned.

Genoa, in her turn, rose in April, but there La Marmora crushed the Revolution. Florence presently regretted her precipitate action, and Tuscany recalled Leopold.

Republics are not founded by riots. . . . A deeply-rooted Revolution is required for that.

Here we are then at April 25th. General Oudinot has received the command of the expeditionary force of the Mediterranean. A squadron under the orders of Admiral Tréhouart is landing eighteen hundred men at Cività-Vecchia, to occupy the town without obstruction.

Mazzini, Garibaldi, and Avezzana, who now formed the Triumvirate in Rome, decided that the city should be defended to the last. Mazzini was Tribune of the Roman Assembly and had the red flag hoisted. Garibaldi took command of the chaotic army of the defenders and drilled these improvised soldiers, instilling into their minds something of his own adventurous and patriotic ardour.

The French Officers charged to convey a pacific message were greeted by a couple of cannon-balls. Oudinot ordered an assault. We were repulsed, leaving on the ground more than two hundred dead, three hundred wounded, and four hundred prisoners.

Our troops then took up a position on the plateau situated opposite the Pertuzza Gate. Oudinot despatched a telegram, to which the President replied : "The news announcing the unexpected resistance which you have encountered beneath the walls of Rome has pained me greatly. I had hoped that the inhabitants of the Eternal City would have opened their eyes to facts, and have welcomed with eagerness an army which had come to accomplish among them a benevolent and disinterested mission. It has proved otherwise ; our soldiers have been received as enemies ; our military prestige is now involved, and cannot be suffered to receive injury. Reinforcements will not fail to be sent to you."



That same day, May 7th, the National Assembly, by 328 votes to 240, invited the Government to adopt the necessary measures to prevent the expedition being deterred from carrying out its object.

The Opposition journals are loud in their denunciation of the President's message, but, happily, there are friends to defend him. Notably the *Pays*, which exclaims: "We have at our head a valorous man on whose brow Heaven has set the seal of leadership. . . . Napoleon is our hope, our honour, our anchor, our sword, our flag." But this eulogy, again, is dictated by policy, and Louis Napoléon knows this perfectly well. I repeat, because he has told me so in confidence, that he would prefer, at bottom, that the Roman question should be settled otherwise than by arms. He is furious with the Pope for dragging him into this embarrassment. I here affirm that he is sacrificing his convictions to the necessities of government. The proof of which is, that he has charged M. de Lesseps with an extraordinary mission, in order to try to reconcile Republican freedom with ecclesiastical authority.

Well, M. de Lesseps has not proved sufficiently complaisant to the Pope, and the obstinacy of his Holiness has brought about the failure of the good intentions of the President.

Oudinot, as it happens, has made himself equally objectionable. De Lesseps had in the end obtained an armistice, in order to enable him to conclude with the Triumvir a treaty fully recognizing the Roman Republic. Oudinot refused to sign this. It has been found necessary to recall Lesseps, despatch Corcelles in his place, and give orders to attack Rome.

The President is broken-hearted. . .

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The siege accordingly began on May 30th. The Villa Panfilì and the Ponte-Molle, both of them advantageous positions, were quickly carried. On June 21st, at eleven in the evening, the assault was made, and then the Janiculum was occupied. On the 29th the fortress

capitulated. On July 3rd we entered Rome and carried the Castle of St. Angelo. The clubs were dissolved, General Rostalan appointed Governor, and the gates reopened to the Pope.

Would he enter? No, all this was not enough. Pius IX. was not yet satisfied. He would not enter the city so long as the French remained in Rome!

For my part, I think the thing was monstrous altogether. From Gaëta Pius IX. had sent three Cardinals: Della Genga, Vannicelli, and Altieri, forming a Governmental Commission. Well, this Commission made no concessions whatever to the Liberals, and granted only a mere semblance of amnesty.

Very naturally the President was incensed once more.

"In dealing with such men," he said to me one evening, "one can only act as my uncle did . . . and to think that, before the world, I am obliged to treat them with respect! . . . Ah! the old, eternal strife between the Church and the World!"

Yes, he said that to me. And then he wrote to Edgar Ney, his Orderly General, then on a mission to Rome, that famous letter of which only a part, to some extent official, was reproduced in the newspapers. Here is the tenor of the portion which was not given to the Press, nor even communicated to the Ministers, and for which I am indebted solely to the friendship of Louis Napoléon, who here expresses his real sentiments:

"My dear Ney, the French Republic has not sent an army to Rome to stifle Italian liberty, but, on the contrary, to regulate it by preserving it against its own excesses, and to give it a solid foundation by restoring to the Pontifical Chair the first Pope who has placed himself boldly at the head of all useful reforms. I learn with sorrow that the benevolent intentions of the Holy Father, like our own actions, remain unfruitful in the presence of hostile influences and passions. . . . I summarize as follows the conditions of the temporal restoration of the Pope: '*General amnesty, secularization of the Administration, the Code Napoléon, and Liberal Government.* . . .' When our armies marched through Europe

they left behind everywhere, as the mark of their passage, the destruction of the abuses of feudalism and the germs of liberty ; it shall not be said that in 1849 a French army could act in any other way or bring about any other results. . . .”

Such were the real sentiments of the Prince, who must not therefore be accused of aiding and abetting tyranny ; but neither the Italians nor the Pope had a word of thanks or gratitude for him. Not a soul is pleased. Well, henceforth let us leave other people to get out of their scrapes by themselves !



## CHAPTER V

### PRESIDENTIAL PROGRESSES

1849, 1850, 1851

1849: The Prince's *Police de Poche*; a ludicrous misadventure—Chartres—Amiens—Ham: associations and memories; Bou-Maza—On the Loire: Angers, Nantes, Saumur, Tours, Blois—On the Seine: Rouen, Elbeuf, Evreux, Louviers, Havre—1850: Soissons—Dijon—Lyons—One long ovation: flowers, speeches, and festivities—Opening of new railways—Besançon: an awkward incident—"East" wind—Strassburg—Metz—Rheims—In Normandy again: Caen, Cherbourg, Argentan, Saint-Lô, Coutances, Granville, Avranches—1851: Revisits Dijon—Beauvais and Jeanne Hachette.

THE Prince never travels without his little note-book, which he calls his Police Pocket-book. This note-book contains an accurate list of persons whom he has to visit, together with useful information concerning each one—their age, past history, family relationships, character, influence in the country, profession, tastes, political, religious and social views, etc.

So, on arriving at a town, after carefully consulting his little book, he knows exactly who is the Préfet, Mayor, or such-like personage who is about to receive him, and is able to make the appropriate remark to each. And every man-Jack of them feels flattered at being so well known by the Head of the State!

This precaution, nevertheless, produces now and again an amusing misunderstanding. In a town where the Mayor had read him an address, the Prince, in thanking him, complimented him on his excellent health and vigorous old age, on the marriage of his daughters,

and condoled with him on the loss of his brother who had died a month previously. The Mayor listened in amazement. He had neither brother nor daughters, and did not consider himself old at fifty. . . . Napoleon had turned over two pages at once, and thought he was addressing the Mayor of the town at which he was due the next day.

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CHARTRES, *July 6th*, 1849.—The line from Paris to Chartres has been opened. In passing through Rambouillet the Prince listened to an address in which the Sous-Préfet said: "We are happy to come and salute the railway carriage that bears Cæsar and his fortunes."

Three days ago the General Council of the Seine-Inférieure, in congratulating him on the repression of the riots of June 13th, remarked in its address:

"You have triumphed with a courage worthy of that great man who has left you his name and example. . . . Pursue that almost Divine mission which has been entrusted to you, M. le Président. You have already won the esteem and gratitude of France; the six million suffrages which she gave you because you bear that name which she regards as the symbol of peace and order, she gives you to-day on your *own* account."

At Chartres the Prince, in his address, very adroitly recalled the memory of St. Bernard, who came there to preach the second Crusade (thus suggesting that he, too, was pursuing an ideal which, like Religion, is superior to material interests), and that of Henri IV., who was crowned at Chartres at the close of ten years of civil war.

"Well!" he exclaimed, "it is again to religious faith and to conciliation that we must appeal to-day; to the faith which sustains us in our efforts, and to the conciliation by which our powers are increased, and which leads us to hope for a brighter future."

The rejoicings of the citizens of Chartres that day were a thing never to be forgotten. The roofs and terraces were thronged with people. The bells pealed,

and the voices of the crowd rent the air with a noise resembling salvos of artillery.

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AMIENS, *July 15th*.—More than a hundred and fifty thousand visitors arrived in the town to witness the presentation of colours to the National Guard of the Somme : a joyous and motley assembly ; some wearing blouses, others in modern dress, hats, helmets, and shakos mingled in picturesque confusion. As the Prince goes by, shouts are raised, hands extended, sticks waved in the air. . . . The Guards have decorated the barrels of their rifles with little tricoloured flags stamped with a portrait of the Prince. After the review we went to the Cathedral through lines of cheering spectators.

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HAM, *July 22nd, 1849*.—What memories here for the Prince-President and for myself ! Ham—the erst-while scene of our imprisonment and escape ; Ham—where we studied and read and dreamed ; Ham—the scene of sundry love episodes, of not a few hours of despair, ending in the prisoner's sudden dash for liberty. Louis Napoléon wished to revisit his prison and behold once more the very spot where he would sit for hours at a stretch, his head resting on his hands, his eyes gazing on vacancy, as if they would read the future. The prison is now tenanted by Bou-Maza, the Algerian chief, who also is paying the penalty of too rash a bid for freedom.

The Prince, after thanking the inhabitants of the town for the sympathy which they had extended to him at the time of his misfortunes, signalized his visit by repairing again to the prison and releasing Bou-Maza, who was overcome, dazed with gratitude to his deliverer.

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PROGRESS THROUGH THE LOIRE COUNTRY : *beginning of August 1849*.—The Prince has just opened the railway from Angers to Tours. The whole district of the Loire turned out to meet him. From Orleans to Angers



the people, lining the railway, greeted the train with acclamations.

The Bishop of Angers, in welcoming the President, congratulated him on the termination of the Italian affair, on the capture of Rome and the triumph of the Pope. He had done better to hold his tongue. But perhaps it is for the best. . . . It rained nearly the whole day ; but, in spite of the abominable weather, the town was thronged. Loud shouts arose from both banks of the Loire as the President embarked for Nantes, and the people followed the boat crying "Vive Napoléon !" At each town that he passed the bells rang and the guns fired a salute. At Saint-Florentin the Prince stopped to visit the monument of Bonchamps, hero of the La Vendée wars.

At Nantes his arrival was a veritable triumph. There were actually shouts of "Vive l'Empereur !" although Dufaure had ordered the functionaries to cry "Vive la République !" and not even "Vive Napoléon !" The rain which continues to fall does not damp the enthusiasm. The Prince's speech at the banquet was warmly received. It was noticed that he did not mention the word "Republic."

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At Tours, again, to a similar greeting, he observed as follows :

"Vive l'Empereur," cried a woman.

"It was my uncle who was the Emperor."

"Vive l'Empereur," repeated a soldier of the Guard.

"Not yet !"

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Returned to Paris by Rennes and Blois. Similar speeches from the Prince and from the civil and ecclesiastical authorities. Similar greetings of sympathy from the crowd.

\* \* \*

THROUGH THE SEINE COUNTRY : *August 1849.*—We reached Rouen on the 12th, after passing through Poissy, where the National Guards mustered in such force along the line that the Prince had to have the train stopped ; he then reviewed them, to their great delight. Changarnier

was of our party, and it was amusing to see him putting on a sort of Imperial air by the side of the man who alone had the right to assume such an attitude.

I love Rouen, a city which preserves so jealously its ancient splendours, a city which, more than any other, by the picturesque lines of its buildings, recalls the glories of the Middle Ages. On this point the Prince and I do not agree. He prefers the classic and regular style, while I delight in the diversity of broken lines. But no matter. My ears are still ringing with the strains of the "*Veillons au Salut de l'Empire*" which the band played at Poissy, and now we are here in the old city, and going, first of all, to hear mass in the cathedral. It strikes me as a trifle ridiculous ; still it produces a good impression. The Archbishop was solemnly gracious. He of course began in the same old strain : "The Church owes you her prayers and gratitude for having restored to the Holy Father his temporal authority." This compliment always gives me the fidgets. I prefer the words of the Mayor, at the banquet in the evening. He drank : "To Napoleon, and to his nephew, called to be the saviour of France and of civilization." And so it is everywhere ; he is appealed to as the sole master and protector of the country. Why should he shirk his destiny ?

From Rouen we went on to Havre, the railway being lined with cheering multitudes. Leaving the train at Granville to drive the remainder of the journey, we passed between files of guards holding rifles decked with flags and flowers. At Bolbec the band and the firemen drowned the sound of the horses' feet and the carriage-wheels in a musical rivalry which greatly amused me. At Ingouville, the Curé was awaiting us under a canopy, and at the farther end of the village we drove through a triumphal arch. At Havre the windows and the shipping were decked with flags. It was a scene of frenzied joy. The men waved their hats, the women threw flowers. A pretty girl, in her excitement, offered me a large bouquet, and I embraced her with all the good-will in the world. Whether it was a Republican or an Imperialist kiss, I don't know ; it was a lovely kiss, anyhow.



Shortly afterwards we went to Elbeuf ; our reception here was not so agreeable, and bordered on the grotesque, for nuns knelt in the road, praying with clasped hands. I preferred the cheers that followed, issuing from the throats of fifteen thousand workmen.

After Evreux came Louviers, where the same scenes greeted us, only that here the enthusiasm was increased by the presence of some old soldiers of the Empire, men who had seen "the Other" addressing, like the present Napoleon, crowds whose excitement surpassed all bounds.

\* \* \*

SOISSONS, *June 9th.*—Here the Prince was received by the Bishop. The musical resources of both Church and State were combined to do him honour. At the banquet in the evening a farm-servant, who was wearing upon his peasant's blouse a medal bestowed upon him for bravery in a former campaign, was invited to dine at the Prince's own table.

\* \* \*

DIJON, *August 13th.*—We are literally intoxicated with the exuberance of the shouts and acclamations. The same frantic scenes of joy at Melun, Montereau, Joigny. At Sens flowers were rained upon the President's carriage by the women. At Ancy he visited the iron-works, where he distributed pieces of gold among the workmen, who wept for joy, and many of them had the honour of grasping with their roughened hands the hand of the President. At Montbard—that pretty town which one sees from the road, tumbling down the side of a hill, as it were—our carriages were attacked . . . so agreeably. A young girl, mistaking me for Louis Napoléon, offered me her rosy cheek to kiss. I was delighted with the mistake. At Viteaux, at Velars, the carriage-wheels were entangled in feet and petticoats. The horses seemed to understand what was going on. Wreaths of flowers were attached to their harness. Laughing, shouting, singing, everywhere. At Dijon nine hundred and fifty



workmen presented a richly embroidered flag, and a bevy of girls offered big bouquets. The Mayor brought up to the carriage an old soldier who had received twenty wounds during the wars of the Empire, but had never been decorated.

"It is but right that the nephew should repair the omissions of the uncle," said Louis Napoléon, handing him a medal and a note for five hundred francs.

The Prince, according to his custom, visits the factories, workshops and hospitals, scattering words of encouragement and help. And yet surprise is expressed at his asking for an increase of salary! Does he not give back to the people the money which he is paid by them?

\* \* \*

LYONS, *August 15th*, 1850.—On August 14th we embarked on the *Hirondelle* and stopped at Thoise, Saint-Romain, Belleville, Beauregard, Saint-Bernard, and Trévoux.

I find in a newspaper this anecdote:

As our boat landed at Beauregard, a bather emerged completely naked from the water and shouted, "Long live the Social Republic!" The onlookers were for treating him roughly. "Stop!" said the Prince, with a smile. "It is only natural that a *sans-culotte* should be a supporter of the Social Republic." I did not hear this witty remark, but I think it quite likely that he made it.

The Prince was received at Lyons by the Municipal Council. He then rode on his white charger, and amid the shouts of an accompanying multitude, to the Cathedral, afterwards holding a review, visiting the hospital, and paying his respects to the Archbishop. The next day he held another review, visited the workshops, and was present at the inaugural ceremony of a Mutual Help Society for silk-workers.

We left Lyons for Lons-le-Saulnier, and so on to Miribel, Montluel, Chalamont, and Bourg, at each of which places triumphal arches had been erected and we were greeted with cries of "Vive Napoléon! vive l'Empereur!"

At Lons-le-Saulnier Vidomski said to me :

"You will see another Ravailac arise, who will cut short his triumphant career with a dagger."

"You are mad. The Parliament may hate him, but the people certainly do not."

I noticed, however, that after leaving Dôle the enthusiasm seemed to be suddenly damped. At Besançon a singular incident occurred at a ball given in the *Halle*. I was at one end of the dancing-hall and the Prince at the other, when I noticed near me a suspicious group of men who were whispering :

"Come on; we'll make him say, 'Vive la République !'" And the group advanced, in a very excited manner, towards the President. I followed them. A sort of scuffle took place. Three or four gendarmes hurried up, and M. Castellane drew his sword. I threw myself upon the most excited of these individuals, and gripped hold of him. Others followed my example, and the President was quickly got clear of them. But the incident produced an unpleasant impression ; Vidomski's words recurred to me, and I shuddered at the thought of a possible tragedy. Belfort and Mulhouse were decidedly cool. I advised the abandonment of the tour.

"Never," replied the Prince. "I have come, not with a view of being acclaimed, but to ascertain exactly how far the sympathies of France are with me. I will carry out the tour, as arranged, to the end."

\* \* \*

STRASSBURG, 1850.—At Colmar there were hostile cries, and several officers absented themselves from the review. A big fellow had the audacity to shout, "Vive la République, Monsieur Bonaparte !" within two feet of the Prince, and I replied, "Vive la République, Monsieur le malotru" (ill-bred fellow).

That happened as we were leaving. A roar of laughter greeted my sally, and encouraging shouts were raised of "Vive Napoléon !"

\* \* \*

METZ, August 1850.—After Phalsbourg and Sarre-



PALACE AND GARDENS OF SAINT-CLOUD.





bourg, after Dieuze, where the President's carriage passed under an arch decorated with rock-salt and moss, after Lunéville, where the Prince decorated a cuirassier who had fought at the Beresina, and where I nearly sprained my ankle, after Nancy, where banquet and review passed off fairly well, after Pont-à-Mousson, where my horse took fright (our tour in the far east has decidedly been inauspicious), we recovered at Metz some of our lost prestige, and were welcomed once more with flowers, decorated houses, and outstretched hands. An officer, however, of the National Guard exclaimed, "Long live the Republic—and nothing but the Republic!" The exclamation was obviously meant to be insulting, and was greeted with applause by his comrades. The Prince frowned, and, for the first time since he began his tour, used words of severity: "Gentlemen, how am I to take these acclamations, all the more out of place as they have been made while I am being received by the authorities? If these acclamations are meant as advice, my actions reply for me. If they are meant as a lecture, I refuse to be dictated to by anybody whatsoever."

\* \* \*

RHEIMS, *August* 1850.—At Verdun twenty young girls presented the President with comfits on a silver-gilt dish. After leaving Verdun, in proportion as we approached nearer to the heart of the country, sympathy revived with even more vigour than before, and we were greeted with flowers, illuminations, and welcoming shouts. At Rheims the Mayor and other worthies of the town express the confidence which is reposed in the name of Napoleon. The Mayor especially is impressed with the notion that the President's name shines as a bright symbol of order and security. He said as much in his address of welcome, and repeated it in giving the toast of the evening.

\* \* \*

CAEN, *September* 1850.—After scarcely two days' rest, the President wants to start again. He has a wonderful

power of resisting fatigue. My eyes still ache from watching the swarming crowds, and my ears are still deafened with the blast of trumpets and the roar of acclamations. And now we have to repeat in the west what we have just gone through in the east. I, indeed, have enjoyed a short rest, whereas the Prince, the very evening before his departure, went to Saint-Cyr and listened to the cadets, led by their commanding officer, General Alexandre, shouting their "Vive Napoléons!" with throats of brass.

The procession of carriages passed through Nanterre, through Saint-Germain teeming with the memories of kings, through Mantes-la-Jolie seated on the banks of the Seine, amidst joyous applause and the scattering of flowers. At Evreux so numerous were the flowers that the Prince in his carriage looked as though he were issuing from an enormous bouquet. At Bernay speech from the Mayor, and kissing of girls. At Lisieux a peasant offered a crown of flowers with the words :

"Prince, allow a son of Lisieux to offer you this crown as a token of unbounded devotion to yourself."

"Do not compare me to kings," replied Louis Napoléon. "I have suffered too much for that. I am your friend, the friend of the people."

These last words were drowned by shouts and cheers.

At Caen a triumphal arch decked in greenery and flowers betokened again the popular sympathy. The Mayor, M. Desmazes, the President of the Council-General, M. d'Houdetot, and the Bishop of Bayeux vied with one another in complimentary speeches. The President replied to each of them, and I still note, with amazement, that he never repeats himself, or at least that he never makes the same speech when returning thanks on similar occasions.

\* \* \*

CHERBOURG, *September* 1850.—From Caen we came to Cherbourg. After being met with cheers at Bayeux and Isigny, we were greeted a mile or so outside the town by five-and-twenty Mayors, in their chains of office, who



had ridden out to meet us. It was a sublime spectacle—or very nearly! These worthy folk are evidently not all skilled in the art of riding. But it must be said that they had not confided themselves to the backs of prancing Arabs. They were peacefully seated on their rather heavily built Normandy horses and trying their hardest to assume an imposing air. It would have formed a fine scene for some painter (why was not M. Vernet there?), and the chief of all these Mayors—he of Cherbourg, to wit—greeted the Prince with this brief address:

“We receive you badly, but we love you well.”

\* \* \*

ARGENTAN, *September* 1850.—Saint-Lô, Coutances, Granville, Avranches, Falaise. . . . Why repeat myself? Frenzied delight everywhere. At Argentan the crowds of visitors could not find accommodation in the hotels, and many of them had to sleep out of doors.

\* \* \*

DIJON, *June 1st*, 1851.—Here we are at Dijon once more. The Prince has come here for the opening of the railway. But what a contrast between to-day's speech and that of last year! Fourteen months ago there was peace between him and the Assembly; to-day, the rumblings of war.

BEAUVAIS, *July 6th*.—Unveiling of the statue of Jeanne Hachette. The Archbishop and the Prince-President vied with one another in eloquence.

*July* 1851.—I have not been able, this year, to follow the Prince on all his travels. But I have read the reports sent in, and I know from what he has told me himself that his language grows more and more significant. I think this phrase used at the banquet at Poitiers sums up the situation:

“I contemplate the future of the country without alarm, for its salvation will ever depend on the will of the people, freely expressed and religiously obeyed.”

## CHAPTER VI

### PREPARATIONS FOR THE "COUP D'ÉTAT" ; THE COMTE DE MORNAY

*Autumn of 1851*

Active Bonapartist propaganda—M. de Montalembert's dilemma—Secret preparations ; unknown even to the Baron d'Ambès—Fall of the Ministry—Persigny, Maupas, Saint-Arnaud—Thiers on the prowl—*Le Spectre Rouge*—*Coup d'État* inevitable and generally expected—A detailed programme—General Magnan, Fleury—De Mornay : birth, education ; man of pleasure, dandy, wit, courtier ; his courage, his cool audacity, his selfishness, his boldness—Pen-portrait by Victor Hugo.

*August 1851.*—The Assembly has adjourned for the recess ; now is the time for *us* to work hard. We are all thinking of the approaching and inevitable *Coup d'État*. Shall we make it, according to Carlier's plan, during the prorogation ? There are grounds for fearing the effect of the presence of the Members in their own Departments.

We content ourselves, therefore, with continuing the Bonapartist and anti-Revolutionary propaganda, and wait for the decisive hour which autumn will bring with it.

M. de Montalembert has already very pertinently put forward this dilemma :

"One of two things : either the Constitution is in conformity with the national will, or it is not. If it is not, who dare force it upon the country ? If it is, why do the Republicans decline to grant this supreme and convincing opportunity of approving the Constitution ? Why do they shrink from the chance of crushing us beneath an overwhelming declaration of public opinion ?

If they wish to preserve the Republic and the Constitution, they must open the door, or it will be burst in."

They have *not* opened the door. We will *force* it open.

\* \* \*

*August 1851.*—We are all urging the Prince to take the course which, if not legal in form, is yet the rightful one.

Persigny is the most convincing, and has most influence with him. On the 11th of this month Morny, Carlier, Rouher, and he met at Saint-Cloud to study the question of the *Coup d'État*. I also had a long conversation yesterday with Espinasse and Fortoul on the same subject.

We are calling to the colours, as it were, those on whom we can most depend, and some important appointments have been made. On July 17th Magnan was made Commander-in-Chief of the Army of Paris, in which Saint-Arnaud assumed command of a division on the 26th.

It was Fleury who recommended the latter to Louis Napoléon.

Espinasse, Canrobert, Marulaz, and other officers on whose loyalty we can depend have just been summoned to Paris.

All this is armed force, it will be said! And you call this complying with the will of the Nation?

The Nation is a flock, enthusiastic indeed, but without order or discipline. And it is only the majority that is for us. The minority will be a cause of bloodshed. We are arming in order that the Revolution may be a peaceful one.

\* \* \*

*August 15th.*—Bonapartist banquets, at which there are cries of "Vive l'Empereur!" We can see the storm approaching which will cause a disturbance, but which will sweep the air clear of pestilential vapours, after which the sky will be serene.

Many people, naturally, are indulging in forecasts, guesses, and presentiments; but what matter!



So much the worse for those who lose their tempers ;  
so much the worse still for those who remain incredulous.  
The crisis is coming !

\* \* \*

*September.*—At the present moment, apart from the intimates of the Élysée, nobody knows what sword is being secretly forged for cutting the Gordian Knot tied by the Assembly. *Nobody ! not even the Government !* (Written some days later) . . . Not even I ! With amazement—shall I add with some vexation ?—I learn that the *Coup d'État* had been fixed for September 17th.

Carlier, Saint-Arnaud, and Magnan alone were in the secret.

The *Préfet de Police* hesitated. The Generals thought it wise to postpone the affair until after the meeting of the Assembly.

I said to the Prince, "Then you cannot trust me ?"

"Oh yes, I can ; *but* I know you are writing a Diary. . . ."

How did he know ? I reflected ; and then I said to myself, "Well, he is right !"

\* \* \*

*October.*—A Ministerial crisis, which has proved fatal to the Government.

Louis Napoléon desires the repeal of the law of May 31st. The Ministry resisted. It resisted, and so he killed it.

He has formed a new Ministry as follows :

War : Leroy de Saint-Arnaud.

Interior : Thorigny.

Foreign Affairs : Turgot, a member of the old French peerage.

Marine : Fortoul.

Justice : Daviel, procurator-general at Rouen.

Education : Giraud, of the Institute.

Agriculture and Commerce : de Casabianca.

Public Works : Lacrosse.

Finance : Blondel.

What names ! The Opposition hisses its contempt. Never mind. This Ministry is a mere screen. Behind it, the grand drama is about to be played. In the above list the name of Maupas is wanting. The reason is, that he has a more important position than that of Minister. He is *Préfet de Police*.

This Ministry was not formed without difficulty. Persigny and Fleury arranged it. The Ministers appointed—they are merely stopgaps—were not to know the Prince's real intentions. And the men first thought of laid it down as a condition that they should receive an assurance that no *Coup d'État* was contemplated in the immediate future. At last men were found who would serve without any conditions. M. Corbin, who was at first appointed Minister of Justice, withdrew his name almost immediately, and I suggested to Persigny Daviel in his place. For this Ministry, it must be owned, is the work of Persigny.

\* \* \*

*October.*—The hour approaches. The Prince, though his manner to me is as cordial as ever, becomes more reserved on matters of State. He confides only in Maupas, Saint-Arnaud, and Persigny. Nevertheless, his plans are leaking out. Mocquart, who is in the same case as myself, knows pretty well what is going to happen.

\* \* \*

*November 12th.*—Something very funny. I saw this evening a little man prowling round the *Élysée*, accompanied by several others who had the air of conspirators.

Who might this be?

*November 13th.*—It was *Thiers*. How we laughed !

*November.*—A pamphlet by Romieu : "The Red Spectre of 1852," has succeeded in alarming Parliamentary circles. It remarks :

"All human disputes end in the sword. . . . That is the only conclusion to quarrels, whether force is applied peacefully under the warrant of the Constitution, as in the case of Assemblies where the majority overpowers the minority, or whether it acts with violence and in its own

name, as in war, where skill and courage establish their authority. The thin mist of *ideas* ever dissolves at the appearance of *force*."

Between you and me, Romieu talks nonsense. Moreover, he is a professed *farceur*, who is not to be taken seriously. We don't trouble to ask the beams of a scaffolding if they are dirty.

I was told a good story about Romieu. One night, he was so drunk he fell down in the street. His friends, not being able to carry him, contented themselves with fixing up a red lantern close to him, like those which are hung up at night when the street is under repair.

\* \* \*

*End of November.*—Everybody everywhere now talks of the *Coup d'État* as of something necessary and imminent. In the salons it is a subject for pleasantries. At the Élysée it is studied in all its details. The Church is hoping for it, the people expecting it, the Army counting upon it.

A Colonel of the Lancers—the same who, at Satory, gave the signal for shouts of "Vive l'Empereur"—has just entertained his comrades at a grand "punch." They drank toasts of no equivocal character to the health of Napoleon.

The Archbishop of Paris has declared that social order is tottering, and that we need a saviour. And he has named that saviour.

In a week from now all will be over.

\* \* \*

. . . 1852.—I now know the details of the preparations for the *Coup d'État* in a more complete fashion, for the extremely cautious Prince did not tell me all!

It was at the end of October that the plan was sketched out between Saint-Arnaud and Maupas. About that time Louis Napoléon furnished them with absolute proofs of Changarnier's plot against the Élysée. To wait longer meant ruin. Saint-Arnaud studied the *Coup d'État* as one studies the plans for a battle. From September, lists of



the necessary proscriptions had already been drawn up at Saint-Cloud. As for the business to be done, a timetable for each hour was arranged. Here it is :

From 3 to 4 a.m. reception of the Commissaries of Police by the Préfet, and instructions given to them.

At 5.30 occupation of the buildings of the Assembly.

At 6 arrest of dangerous Generals, Representatives, heads of societies, and democrats.

At 6.30 posting up of proclamations, and disposition of troops near the houses where arrests are taking place.

At 7 everything ought to be completed.

At 8 the Minister of the Interior sends his instructions to the Préfets.

\* \* \*

*The men of the Coup d'État.*—Disregarding myself, for, by my own choice, I played no official part in the movement, there remain to be sketched some interesting outline portraits of the persons to whom we owe the Second Empire.

Three stand in the foreground : Saint-Arnaud, Morny, Maupas.

In the middle distance : General Magnan, Persigny, Fleury.

Several more in the background ; but, as the distance recedes, their outlines become more faint.

For the present I shall confine myself to Morny.

Morny is a singular personage ; a man of affairs, or, rather, a *dandy* in the world of business. It must be allowed that he plays his part in a highly superior manner. He is, moreover, as complicated as is his origin. This origin, of which people tell you in whispers, is like a fairy-tale.

Once upon a time there was a pretty woman, offspring of the illicit amours of Louis XV., who became one of Talleyrand's mistresses. This pretty woman had a son who won the rank of General and the favours of a Queen. From the loves of this General and this Queen was born a child, who was thus related to an Emperor and brother of a President of the Republic now in the way of becoming an Emperor in his turn. Being a love

child, it was quite natural that he should remain faithful to Love. Auguste de Morny, grandson of Madame de Flahaut and son of Queen Hortense, would naturally, owing to the Royal and Imperial blood in his veins, move in the highest circles of the aristocracy.

His grandmother, the widow of the Comte de Flahaut de la Billarderie, had married, as her second husband, the Comte de Souza Bothelo, while his father had married, in 1817, the daughter of Admiral Keilh de Banheast. The little Auguste was secretly born in the Rue Cerutti (others say Rue Montmartre) in 1811, and registered under the name of Demorny, a worthy citizen of Versailles who accepted the paternity in presence of two witnesses, one a tailor, the other a cobbler. Two hundred and fifty pounds were paid by way of indemnity to Demorny; his name, which happened to be of a form convenient for specifying the son of a Count, was cut in two, and the child was handed over to Madame de Souza, wife of the Portuguese ambassador, with the addition of a pension of eight thousand pounds. M. Delessert, formerly Préfet de Police (to whom I owe most of this information) was his guardian. It is said that Madame de Souza was fond of gambling. That is possible, if one may judge by her grandson. She delighted in writing; Auguste prefers a life of action. As for M. de Flahaut, he was a rollicking free-liver. Auguste takes after him. Morny entered at Saint-Cyr, after studying at the Collège Bourbon and subsequently at the Staff College, whence he came out as sub-lieutenant in 1833, under the special protection of General Carbonnel, a former aide-de-camp of his father's.

Morny entered upon life through the golden door. He frequented the most distinguished salons, and led a life of gaiety and flirtation. He had soon disburdened himself of all scruples. Véron once told me a very amusing anecdote on this head.

At Fontainebleau, the only place where he was quartered at which he felt at all bored, he filled up his time by reading some theological books, and when Madame de Souza asked him the reason for his choice :

"I wish to study Religion, right-away," he replied,



"because I want now, once and for all, to get to the bottom of the whole question."

After Saint-Cyr and Fontainebleau, Madame de Souza having died, Morny asked to be sent to Africa, pushing his dandyism to the extent of wanting to taste the joy of promotion by merit alone, when he might so easily have had a brilliant career at Court!

He was very friendly with the Orleans family, particularly with the young Duke, the one who was the victim of the accident at Neuilly, to whom he had been introduced by Carbonnel.

Fitting surroundings for little love-affairs. When Morny set out for Algiers astonishment and admiration were expressed, and people observed with a smile: "What a lot of women will be in tears!"

General Oudinot took Morny as his aide-de-camp, and it was in this capacity that he went through the campaign of Mascara. It is related that, one evening, when he was worn out with fatigue and half dead of thirst, an officer handed him an orange, which he was greatly delighted to receive. He wished to know this good comrade's name:

"I am Captain Changarnier," replied the other.

At Constantine, Morny saved the life of General Trézel by flinging himself in front of him. Result: four bullets which merely pierced his cap, and the Cross of the Legion of Honour! He is a man who gets luck thrown in his way. He had observed the good work done by Changarnier at this time, and, grateful for the timely offering of the orange, mentioned him to his commanding officer, who bore the recommendation in mind.

Falling a victim to fever, he sent in his papers in 1838 and returned to Paris, where he at once became absorbed in the whirl of society.

The elegant Morny was now to be seen on the Boulevards and in the salons; a brilliant talker, well versed in affairs, a favourite with the ladies, a gay and agreeable man about town. Business matters were easily mastered by him, and he displayed coolness, boldness, and judgment. He frequented the theatres and other resorts



of pleasure, and gave himself up madly to love, gambling, and drinking. . . . Happy man !

He was a "good fellow" rather than a trusty friend, adventurous rather than ambitious, contemptuous rather than indulgent, patronizing rather than obliging. Supremely selfish, nothing influenced him save in so far as it affected his own interests.

At the age of twenty-seven he had already begun to adopt the title of Comte de Morny, because it sounded better. He wore the title and the red riband with the most perfect ease. He set the fashions. He even wrote for a newspaper, the *Messenger*, which (strange coincidence !) was owned by the Comte de Walewski, a natural son of the first Napoleon.

At this period he was in a fair way to make his fortune in Auvergne, as well as the fortune, if not of that whole province, at least of the Limagne, by establishing there a factory for home-grown sugar to which Madame Léhon subscribed half of the entire capital.

Being an employer of labour, why should he not become a deputy ?

Accordingly he conducted a highly successful and skilful electoral campaign, scattering witty remarks and gold in profusion, and was promptly elected to the Assembly, where Marrast referred to him as "the youngest and the baldest of the men who have satisfied their passions."

For Morny became bald quite early, owing to the game he played of burning the candle at both ends.

Government succeeded Government, but Morny remained as deputy. Need one be surprised ? People vote for candidates rather than for opinions. It is related that an employer, wishing to compel one of his workmen to vote for Changarnier during the *plébiscite* of 1848, the workman, in a spirit of contradiction, knowing no more about one candidate than about the other, purposely and deliberately recorded his vote for Louis Napoléon !

Morny was no Bonapartist as yet, but an Orleanist. In London, one day, Louis Napoléon having been announced at a reception, Morny immediately withdrew

from the room. In 1849 he was against his brother, and against the Republicans as well. But when, in the conflict that ensued between the President and the Assembly, he saw in which direction the current of public opinion was setting, he turned round and sided with the probable victor. He spoke to Walewski, the illegitimate son, as is well known, of the First Napoleon. The Imperial bastard and the Royal bastard were on the best of terms with one another. The reconciliation took place, and henceforth Morny espoused his brother's cause with the most absolute devotion.

On re-reading these notes, written some years ago (I am writing now in 1868), I smile to myself and reflect ; and I insert here the following portrait of Morny drawn by Victor Hugo :—

“ What was Morny ? A self-conceited fop, an intriguer, but not austere, a friend of Romieu and a supporter of Guizot, with the manners of a man of the world and the morals of the roulette-table, self-satisfied and witty, combining a certain liberality of ideas with a readiness to avail himself of a crime, provided that it served any useful purpose—contriving to smile sweetly with villainous bad teeth—leading a life of pleasure, dissipated, but reserved—ugly, good-tempered, fierce and intrepid—unconcernedly abandoning to his fate a prisoner who was only a *brother*, but ready to risk his head for a brother who was an *Emperor*—having the same mother as Louis Bonaparte and, like Louis Bonaparte, of uncertain paternity—having it in his power to call himself Beauharnais, or Flahaut, and actually calling himself Morny—degrading literature into *vaudeville* and turning politics into tragedy—a free-liver, a bully—possessing all the frivolity compatible with villainy—a fit subject for Marivaux's light satire, fitter still for Tacitus' scathing denunciation—a man without conscience, of irreproachable elegance, infamous and amiable—able to play the duke to perfection when need required—such was this evil-doer.”

The description is severe ; but I am not sure that it is altogether untrue.



## CHAPTER VII

### THE "COUP D'ÉTAT"

*December 1851*

Eve of the *Coup d'État*; meeting at the Baron d'Ambès's—Sworn to secrecy—"All will be over in forty-eight hours"—Reception at the Élysée on December 1st—Quick work at the Imprimerie Nationale—Midnight to morning—Louis Napoléon's calmness; compared to Napoleon I. on the eve of Austerlitz—December 2nd: Paris placarded—Maupas and his police agents arrest Generals Changarnier, Lamoricière, Cavaignac, etc.—M. Thiers's arrest described—Incidents and anecdotes—Seven o'clock: Persigny reports at the Élysée; Morny takes possession of the Ministry of the Interior—Eight: the Baron d'Ambès, the Princess Mathilde, and other partisans arrive at the Élysée—Nine: the troops seize strategical points—Ten: the President mounts and rides to the Tuileries, but defers his entry into the Palace—"Vive l'Empereur!"—December 3rd and 4th: barricades—Death of Baudin—A bold stroke: the President's intrepidity—Street fighting; military dispositions—Number of victims exaggerated—End of month: *Coup d'État* ratified—Empire assured.

*December 1851.*—The deed is done! . . . However, not to neglect the warning hint given me by the Prince, I have confided nothing to my Diary during these momentous days. It was the safest course. Now I am at liberty to describe the extraordinary days I have just lived through. To Strassburg, and to Boulogne, I add the words *December 2nd*. Three successive stages, each how surprising! But here are the facts:

On the morning of the 1st there met together at my house MM. Dariste, F. Barrot, Berard, Dubeaux, Mimerel, Vaïsse, Dumas, Ducos, Giraud, Leverrier, Lebœuf, and de Rancé. We discussed and adopted an Appeal to the People.

In the evening, M. de Falloux sent M. de Heeckeren



to propose to the President to make a *Coup d'État* for the advantage of the Legitimists !

The calmness and confidence of Louis Napoléon were amazing. He said to me :

"Swear to me to be silent both by word and pen. You have been a discreet friend, you were useful and devoted at Arenaberg, at Strassburg, at Boulogne, and at Ham. I shall still need you ; but I ask you not to write a line about all that is about to happen until I release you from your promise."

"You have my word."

"All will be finished in forty-eight hours."

With these words he left me. And I acted.

We *all* acted, though none of our ordinary habits or life were disturbed. The Prince was seen in the mornings engaged as usual with Mocquard, his Secretary. Morny went as usual to the Bois and the Jockey Club, and at nights to the Opéra-Comique, where he paid visits of flirtation from one box to another. In that of Madame Liadères the following short dialogue took place :

"They say they are going to make a clean sweep of the Chamber," observed the lady.

"In that case, Madam, I shall try to be on the side of the broom," replied the Duke.

In the course of the day, another noteworthy remark, made by one of the Prince's opponents to Véron the doctor, was heard :

"Does to-day see the end of a mediocrity or the first appearance of a man of genius ?"

At eight in the evening the President found Mocquard tying together all the necessary documents connected with the *Coup d'État*. He wrote in pencil on the packet the word "Rubicon." The table at which he scribbled this was the one on which the first Napoleon had signed his abdication.

At nine he returned to his Secretary's office. I was there. There had been a big dinner. The reception, similar to those on other Mondays, was about to begin. He said to us with a smile :

"Nobody knows or suspects anything ; it is very

amusing." Amusing! he said, *amusing*—though, if the matter failed, he ran the risk of certain ruin.

During the day M. de Bévillé had warned M. de Saint-George, Director of the Imprimerie Nationale :

"An important work will be entrusted to you to-night, for which we require from you secrecy and despatch."

"I understand; you may depend upon me," replied Saint-George with a smile.

He made the necessary preparations and yet went to the Opéra-Comique, where a piece of his brother's was then being played.

Strange coincidence, that in front of a curtain and behind it there were being played two great spectacular dramas, the one in the full glare of the footlights, the other in the dark recesses of the mind!

On coming out, Saint-George dreamed of the approaching dawn. . . . Almost immediately after reaching the Imprimerie he saw M. de Bévillé alighting from a cab. He bestowed a liberal gratuity upon the driver (who presently fell asleep with bottles all round him), and went upstairs to the compositors' room; they had one hour in which to set up the decrees for a dissolution and the assembling of the electors, the Appeals to the People and the Army, the proclamation of the Préfet and his letter to the Commissaries. A company of gendarmes was on guard below, rifles in hand, under the orders of the Director. At one o'clock they went to press. At four everything was completed and sent to M. de Maupas—truly a record performance!

Meanwhile, the reception at the Élysée was in full swing. The Prince was chatting with the ladies, passing from group to group with an agreeable and unconcerned air. Once he drew Colonel Vieyra aside and whispered to him :

"Colonel, have you sufficient control over yourself to hear a great piece of news without betraying it by your countenance?"

"Yes, Prince, I think so."

"Well then . . . it takes place to-night. . . . There,



you didn't give the slightest start, you are a cool hand. Be at your quarters to-morrow at six o'clock to receive orders; but let no officer in uniform show himself. Can you promise me that there shall be no beating to arms and no mustering of troops?"

"Yes, if I have proper official instructions."

"Go and see the Minister of War and arrange matters. But go out quietly, not as if you were executing an order."

And he passed on to shake hands with the Spanish Ambassador, who was coming forward.

At ten the Prince came to look for Mocquard and myself. He began to laugh:

"Do you know what they are saying in the reception-rooms?"

"Oh! the usual banalities."

"No, they are talking of a *Coup d'État*. . . ."

"As usual."

"No . . . of a *Coup d'État* which the Assembly is preparing against myself!"

He returned to the reception, and not till then did he draw Magnan aside and ask him what he thought of the situation. Magnan considered that things were tending towards a *Coup d'État*.

"I guessed your thoughts, my friend. It shall be made to-morrow."

And, taking the General apart, he rapidly unfolded his plans, after which he retired to his study.

All was in readiness. The Imprimerie Nationale was hard at work. Persigny went to wait events at the Palais-Bourbon and Morny took up his quarters at the Ministry of the Interior. Magnan had been warned of what was to happen. Maupas waited for the dawn.

The dawn of *December 2nd*!

What fills me with admiration is, that the Prince has arranged everything so as to avoid any risk of bloodshed; has foreseen everything down to the smallest detail; has desired, not a Revolution, but a change of régime of such a character that we shall pass from anarchy to order without the discharge of a single cannon.



At midnight Morny returned from the Opéra-Comique. He went to join Persigny, Maupas, and Saint-Arnaud, who were already assembled in the President's study. The President shook me by the hand and thus gave me to understand, at the last minute, that even the most loyal of his friends, if he were not playing an active part, must not be present at that supreme interview.

It was not until two o'clock that the five men who were about to lay the foundations of a new order of things separated.

Silence reigned in the Élysée—a silence of scarcely three hours' duration.

"I slept during those three hours," declared the Prince; "and my slumbers were not even disturbed by a dream."

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And this is what was seen on December 2nd. The population of Paris gazing, half-stupefied, at the walls covered with placards; troops collecting here and there; messengers galloping in all directions; arrests of all sorts taking place, including all the elements of danger, whether of those in high places, such as the Assembly, or those of lower position in the street—leaders of secret societies, and men who had erected barricades, both moral and material.

The clear and ringing language of the placards ran as follows :

#### IN THE NAME OF THE FRENCH PEOPLE

The President of the Republic decrees :

Art. I.—The National Assembly is dissolved.

Art. II.—Universal Suffrage is re-established. The Law of May 21st is repealed.

Art. III.—The Comitia of the French People will be held from December 14th to the 21st next.

Art. IV.—A State of Siege is decreed within the limits of the 1st Military Division.

Art. V.—The Council of State is dissolved.

Art. VI.—The Minister of the Interior is charged with the execution of the present decree.

Done at the Palace of the Élysée, December 2nd, 1851.

LOUIS NAPOLÉON BONAPARTE.

*Minister of the Interior,*

DE MORNAY.

There were also comprehensive Manifestos to the people and the army, too lengthy for insertion here.

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A body of troops and a number of gendarmes were placed at the disposal of the Commissaries of Police of Paris and its outskirts. The latter were summoned at five o'clock by M. de Maupas, and, being brought in one by one, were harangued and instructed in their duties. Sixteen of the most capable were told off to arrest and bring to Mazas the sixteen most formidable of the Representatives, namely, MM. Thiers, Baze, Charras, Lagrange, Roger, Nadaud, Miot, Greppo, Cholat, Baune, and Valentin; and also Generals Changarnier, Lamoricière, Cavaignac, Bedeau, and Leflô, as being implicated in a plot against the safety of the State. Forty others, aided by *Officiers de Paix*, were to secure the persons of eighty leaders of clubs and secret societies.

All this was to be carried through by eight o'clock, and, as a matter of fact, it was.

A list had been drawn up of hotels, cafés, and restaurants, known as being meeting-places of the Socialists, and the police were to surround these at dawn, blocking up all means of exit.

When the news of the *Coup d'État* began to spread, the militant party repaired one by one to the usual rendezvous to discuss the situation . . . and were placed under lock and key. The markets were guarded with special stringency to prevent their being utilized for barricades.

In forty minutes all those men who were thought

capable of attempting to produce a counter-revolution were dragged from their beds and locked up. At eight o'clock the railway-stations, telegraph-offices, and other public buildings, the Palais de Justice and the Hôtel de Ville, were in the hands of the new authorities of the Élysée.

The details of the chief arrests made that morning have been related by M. Mayer in a sensational book written by him in fifteen days shortly after the occurrences took place. On reading my notes again, I have interpolated these details, inasmuch as they tally with the various accounts which reached me from several different sources.

M. Hubault the elder, with four assistants, entered at half-past five the garden of the house inhabited by M. Thiers, Place Saint-Georges. All Paris knows this elegant dwelling.

A servant conducted them to the first floor, and, pointing to a door at the end of a long passage, said: "He is in there." A fire was burning comfortably in the room, and a small lamp threw its light on the expressive features of the famous orator, framed by thick curtains of red silk. He appeared to be asleep. His servant touched him on the shoulder and said:

"Sir, here are some gentlemen who wish to speak to you."

He rose up hurriedly, put his hand to his head, and asked:

"What is it about?"

"A search-warrant for you," said the Magistrate. "But do not be alarmed, there is no menace to your safety."

"But what do you intend to do, gentlemen? Do you know that I am a Representative, and that your present action may bring your heads to the scaffold?"

"I am aware of it," said the Commissary gravely. "But even that prospect does not prevent a public official from executing his duty."

"But is it a *Coup d'État* then? And am I the only person who is being treated in this manner?"



The Commissary was silent. He neither wished, nor was it his duty, to give information to M. Thiers nor to argue with him, so he merely repeated the order to get up and follow him. The former President of the Council obeyed, dressed himself slowly and in silence, took up his watch, which he looked at attentively, and suddenly exclaimed in an excited tone :

"Suppose I were to blow out your brains, sir ? Do you know the law ? Are you aware that you are violating the Constitution ?"

The Commissary smiled :

"I am not responsible to you, sir ; I am carrying out the orders of the Préfet de Police, just as I carried out yours when you were Minister of the Interior."

In his house were found only the MSS. of his famous historical works, a pair of loaded pistols, and six political letters—one of which, written by an anonymous friend, offered him a shelter in case of a *Coup d'État*. On leaving the sumptuously furnished study, which reflected the fine artistic tastes of the highly gifted man who inhabited it, the prisoner asked to be allowed to say good-bye to his wife. After five minutes Madame Thiers arrived, dressed in black and with her hair hanging down :

"What is the matter, dear ?" she exclaimed.

"Nothing, dear Éli<sup>s</sup>a," he replied affectionately, "the Préfet de Police wants me. Don't let your mother, who is not well, know what has happened."

They went downstairs, and, while seated in the cab, which drove off in the direction of the Bastille, the statesman recovered all his dialectical faculties. The violation of the law, the dangers of the situation, the possibility of its reversal, the chances of the future—all these would have supplied his speech with caustic comments, and, had he not known so well the man with whom he had to deal, he would probably have attempted to win yet another oratorical triumph. But this was impossible.

The prison-yard was full of troops. At the Head Gaoler's office, where he was entered under his forenames of Marie-Joseph-Louis-Adolphe, he thanked the

Commissary, whose name he carefully noted, entrusted to him a letter for his wife, asked to be served with *café au lait*, and refused to sign the document relating to his arrest on the grounds, as he said, that to do so would be to recognize the legality of the violation of the law committed in regard to him.

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Towards seven in the morning Persigny, Chief of the Staff, came to the Élysée to deliver his account of the events of the past night. All was quiet in and around the Palace. Even the servants were in ignorance of the Revolution that had just taken place. The Prince appeared with a cigarette in his mouth. He was informed that all was going well.

Morny had just arrived at the offices of the Minister of the Interior, where he was engaged in administrative business, guarded by the Chasseurs de Vincennes. Saint-Arnaud was at work at the War Office. Maupas had disseminated his agents throughout the town to disperse the political demonstrators. At the corners of the streets the inhabitants, calm in demeanour, were reading the placards and making fun of the defunct Assembly in outspoken tones.

Towards eight o'clock the partisans of the Prince arrived in the court-yard of the Palace. I was among the first, together with the Princesse Mathilde, the old ex-King Jérôme, Exelmans, Piat, and Beaumont-Vassy. With great emotion I went towards my old friend and grasped his hand, wishing him success. I had not gone to bed all night. Suddenly shouts broke out. The soldiers were greeting the dawn of the Empire.

At nine the troops began to move and took up positions at the Palais-Bourbon, the Champ de Mars, the Tuileries, the Carrousel, the Invalides, the Champs-Élysées, the Concorde, the Hôtel de Ville, and on the quays. The Minister of War rode at a gallop along the ranks, saw that the army was sympathetic, and returned to the Élysée, where, at ten o'clock, the President mounted his horse.



Louis Napoléon rode *alone*, in front of the cortège. A little behind him came the aged Jérôme on the right and Saint-Arnaud on the left; next came Abbaticci, Magnan, Exelmans, and Murat; then Generals Daumas, de Bourjolly, and de l'Étang, Colonels Fleury and Edgar Ney, together with a number of superior officers and other persons, among whom I was not included, preferring to allow myself the position of a mere onlooker contemplating a *Coup d'État* in course of action.

That suited my philosophy, now that I had fulfilled the few tasks which were demanded of me by my friendship with the Prince, who was doubtless going to be successful.

From the Elysée to the Concorde the streets were lined with soldiers and civilians mingled together. The soldiers belonged to Cotte's Brigade, the civilians to our society of the Dix-Décembre. They recognized me, and hands were extended. Acclamations rent the air, assuring the Prince that he was master of the hour.

In the Place de la Concorde there was a momentary thrill. General Cotte came forward to meet the President and shouted:

"Vive l'Empereur!"

"Vive l'Empereur!" echoed the brigade. Suddenly the Prince was surrounded and there were roars of—

"To the Tuileries!"

Louis Napoléon reined in his English charger, electrified by the ovation. At a signal the gate was thrown open. He galloped forward, pointing to the Palace which he had now but to enter, saying:

"I call myself, henceforth, Napoleon the Third."

But when near the Fountain, he pulled up sharply. Jérôme had just whispered in his ear:

"Louis, you are going too fast! Don't enter the Palace yet!"

The Prince understood the warning, set his horse at a walk again, and rode towards the Carrousel.

On his way he grasped the hand of Lawœstine, crossed the Pont-Royal, and took the road back to the Elysée. On passing the Palais-Bourbon, cries being



raised of "Vive la République !" in a fashion that seemed to him to indicate hostility, he whispered to Fleury, and almost immediately the cuirassiers shouted with all *their* might : "Vive la République !"

The Prince had shown great adroitness.

All seemed to be going as well as possible. A certain amount of opposition, however, manifested itself ; but this was no more than had been expected.

The most suspected of the Representatives had been arrested. About a dozen journals had been suppressed, their printing-presses locked up, and their offices occupied by soldiers. The Assembly had been cleared of some thirty deputies who had succeeded in meeting there. Several meetings had been dispersed, including one held in the Rue des Petits-Augustins, presided over by Crémieux ; and the sitting of the High Court at the Palais which was adjudging Louis Napoléon Bonaparte guilty of high treason, had been put an end to. But there still remained something to be dreaded, to wit, the barricades.

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However, towards four o'clock, success appeared to be assured.

The President, acting on the advice of Magnan, reviewed the Korte division, consisting of two regiments of carbineers and two regiments of cuirassiers who had come from Versailles and were encamped in the Champs-Élysées. The review finished, these four regiments proceeded at a trot along the Boulevards, and the spectators had to clear out of the road as the dense mass of cavalry with their clinking sabres rode past. A few shots were fired. Fleury had his *képi* pierced by a bullet, aimed, no doubt, at the President who was supposed to be riding at their head.

In the evening we dined merrily at the Élysée. But our opponents were about to make their last and final attempt at resistance. They could only extricate themselves from the affair by civil war, and to this they were determined to resort.

The Socialist Committees assembled after midday on December 1st. They determined to erect barricades in the faubourgs of the Temple, Saint-Marceau, Saint-Aubonne, the Bastille, the Trône (always the same places!), to have portable bombs, to sound the tocsin. . . .

However, the night passed off quietly. There had been only a slight fall on the Bourse. The Government was ready.

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*December 3rd* was the first bad day. On the one side, the forces of revolt and anarchy; on the other, 28 regiments of infantry, 4 battalions of chasseurs, 2 battalions of the Republican Guard, 2 battalions of gendarmes, 13 battalions of cavalry, 4 companies of engineers, 19 batteries of artillery—all this force devoted to the cause of order and wonderfully disciplined.

The first encounter occurred in the following way. General Marulaz had taken up his position in the Place de la Bastille when warning was brought to him that a barricade was being raised at the point where the Rue Cotte and the Rue Sainte-Marguerite meet the Faubourg Saint-Antoine. Immediately he despatches three companies of the 19th Light Infantry and a battalion of the 44th line regiment by the Rue de Charonne to take the barricade in the flank.

At this barricade were the Representatives Baudin, Schœlcher, Malardier, Dulac, de Flotte and Bruckner, Brillier, Maigne, the advocate Madier de Montjau, and Esquiros the poet. Baudin urged the crowd to arm themselves; but some one shouted to him:

"Do you think we are going to get ourselves killed that you may keep your twenty-five francs?"

"Citizen," replied Baudin, "you shall see how a man dies for twenty-five francs."

At this moment Commander Pujol interposed.

"I wish to speak!" shouted Baudin. "In the name of the Constitution. . . ."

"Fire!" roared a voice.

A bullet from the barricade struck and killed a soldier.



A volley followed. Baudin, shot full in the face, dropped dead.

In spite of all, I salute the corpse of this hero. It was nine o'clock. Half an hour later the troops occupied the Boulevards from the Bastille to the Château d'Eau, and the corner-houses of the Place, where the guns were awaiting their opportunity.

But the insurrection was not overcome yet.

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In the afternoon, at about four o'clock, M. de Maupas sent the following report to General Magnan :

"Barricades are being constructed in the Rue du Rambuteau opposite the Rue Saint-Denis and the Rue Saint-Martin. Carriages have been stopped and omnibuses overturned."

There were now three centres of fighting. One in the neighbourhood of the Rue du Temple, the Rue Rambuteau and the Rue Beaubourg, from which the insurgents are flying in order to carry on a sort of guerilla warfare in the maze of neighbouring streets and to raise barricades in the Rues Greneta, Transnonnain and Beaubourg ; a terrible fusillade is going on at this point.

A second near the Imprimerie Nationale, where the barricade was soon gallantly carried by the gendarmes under Lieutenant Fabre.

A third near the Marché Saint-Honoré, where a few musket-shots quickly mastered the rioters.

At nine the troops retired to their quarters, a final demonstration in the Rue des Gravilliers being suppressed by a handful of police.

All resistance now seemed over ; but, alas ! it was all to begin afresh.

On the 4th I only left my house to go to the Élysée. The evening before I had strolled about a little, but the streets were really hardly safe. My duties were over ; it was for the armed forces to re-establish order. I had only to wait.

Concerning the events of the 4th I only wish to



insert here, by way of memorandum, the report of General Magnan to the Minister of War :

"Seeing that the day had been spent in insignificant and indecisive skirmishes, and suspecting the rioters of an intention to tire out the troops by carrying on disturbances in different quarters in succession, I determined to allow the rising to take its own course, and give the insurgents the opportunity of choosing their own ground and of establishing there a compact mass of men whom I could reach and attack. With this object, I withdrew all my troops into quarters, and then waited.

"Since the morning of the 4th, the reports of the Préfet of Police and my own observations made it certain that mobs of rioters were forming in the Quartiers Saint-Antoine, Saint-Denis, and Saint-Martin, and were beginning to erect barricades there.

"The insurrection appeared to have as its focus the space enclosed between the Boulevards and the Rues du Temple, Rambuteau, and Montmartre.

"At noon I learnt that the barricades were becoming formidable and that the insurgents were entrenched behind them ; but I had decided not to attack before two o'clock, and, adhering firmly to my resolution, I did not advance before that time, although I was strongly urged to do so. I knew the ardour of my troops and their impatience for the fight, and I felt certain of putting down this insurrection within two hours, if the rioters would accept battle openly.

"Success has justified my delay. The attack fixed for two o'clock was to be effected by a converging movement of the divisions of Carrelet and Levasseur.

"Accordingly, the brigade under Bourgon took up its position between the Porte Saint-Denis and the Porte Saint-Martin, while those of Cotte and Canrobert massed on the Boulevard des Italiens, while General Dulac occupied the Pointe-Saint-Eustache, and General Reibell's cavalry established itself in the Rue de la Paix.

"General Levasseur, resuming his position, formed

up his columns so as to support the movements of Carrelet's division.

"At two in the afternoon all these troops made a simultaneous advance.

"Bourgon's brigade swept the Boulevards as far as the Rue du Temple, going down that street as far as the Rue Rambuteau, and clearing away all the barricades which it encountered on the way.

"Cotte's brigade engaged in the Rue Saint-Denis, with a battalion of the 15th Light Infantry dashed into the Rue du Petit-Carreau, which was already barricaded.

"General Canrobert, taking up his position at the Porte Saint-Martin, advanced through the street of the faubourg of that name and the adjacent streets which were obstructed by strong barricades, which the 5th battalion of infantry by the orders of Levassor-Sorval, their commanding officer, carried with extraordinary courage. General Dulac sends forward, to attack the barricades in the Rue de Rambuteau and the adjacent streets, columns formed of the three battalions of the 51st regiment of the line, under Colonel de Lourmel, and of two other battalions, one of the 19th of the line, the other of the 43rd, supported by a battery of artillery.

"At the same time Herbillon's brigade, formed of two columns, of which one was led by General Levasseur in person, penetrated to the very heart of the insurrection by the Rues du Temple, Rambuteau, and Saint-Martin.

"General Marulaz was operating in the same direction by the Rue Saint-Denis, and threw into the cross-streets a light column under the command of Colonel de la Motte-Rouge, of the 19th Light Regiment.

"At the same time General Courtigis, arriving from Vincennes at the head of his brigade, swept the Faubourg Saint-Antoine, in which several barricades had been erected.

"These various operations were conducted, under the fire of the insurgents, with a skill and dash which could not leave success doubtful for a moment. The barricades, assaulted first by cannon-fire, were carried at the point of the bayonet. All that part of the town extending between



the Faubourgs Saint-Antoine and Saint-Martin, and between the Pointe-Saint-Eustache and the Hôtel de Ville were traversed in all directions by our infantry columns, the barricades pulled down and destroyed, the insurgents dispersed and slain. The mobs which tried to form again on the Boulevards were charged by General Reibell's cavalry, which had to sustain, opposite the Rue Montmartre, a pretty heavy fusillade.

"Attacked on all sides at once, disconcerted by the irresistible dash of our troops and by the encircling movements which enveloped, as though with a net-work of fire, the district where they had awaited our attack, the insurgents did not venture upon any further serious attempt.

"At five in the evening the troops of Carrelet's division returned to take up their position on the Boulevard.

"Thus the attack, which had begun at two o'clock, was over before five in the evening. The insurgents were defeated on ground of their own choosing.

"From that moment there has been no further disturbance in Paris, and public traffic has been resumed at all points. The troops have returned to quarters, and from the next day—the 6th—the Parisians, seeing no further display of armed force in the streets, have returned to their business and their ordinary modes of life.

"Unhappily, operations so complicated as these could not be executed without considerable losses. During those days we had 24 killed, including one officer, and 184 wounded, of whom 17 were officers.

"I shall have the honour presently to forward you the names of those of all ranks who seem to me most entitled to rewards, and on whose behalf I beg you to solicit the kind interest of the President of the Republic.

"Receive, sir, the assurance of my respectful devotion."

"MAGNAN,

*"Commander-in-Chief."*

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In the midst of the excitement of December 3rd,



when the streets were resounding with the shouts of the mob, a carriage appeared at the end of the Faubourg Saint-Antoine. Prince Louis Napoléon was in it alone, and without an escort. For a moment the crowd surged round him, then suddenly, subdued by this mark of courage, they fell silent. Finally, they drew back to make way for the carriage, which continued slowly on its way amid shouts of "Vive l'Empereur !"

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Exaggerated statements have been made of the number of victims during these days of December, some people even asserting that it amounted to thousands. The exact total is 380. Still, that is too many. But when you compare it with those of the days of Revolution in 1830 and 1848 !

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*Later date.*—Maupas has related to me his last interview, on the evening before the *Coup d'Etat*, with Louis Napoléon and the three other "conspirators."

"What foolish statements have been made on this subject ! what words that were never spoken have been quoted ! Nothing was ever more simple. You would never have thought that we were on the eve of an historic day. We seemed to be discussing the most ordinary matters in the world. Each of us read, and re-read, and weighed the proclamations, making comments to which the Prince listened with great attention. Saint-Arnaud and I went over once more the measures we intended to take to carry the affair through quickly and effectually. After which the Prince took from his desk a box which he opened, saying to Saint-Arnaud : 'Here is all my wealth, General ; take the half of it. You will perhaps want some of it to-morrow, to distribute in presents.' The box contained sixty thousand francs ; Saint-Arnaud accepted only ten thousand."

"These figures have been slightly misrepresented," said I with a smile.

"Yes, they talk of 500,000 francs given to Morny

and the same amount to Saint-Arnaud, 100,000 to myself, and 50,000 to Espinasse. Where the deuce could the Prince have got that amount of gold?"

I was silent. I know that the figures have been exaggerated. But I think the excellent Maupas has exaggerated also . . . in the opposite direction. There was a cash-box on which Louis Napoléon knew he could draw. . . . However, what matter these miserable questions about money! . . .

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*December 13th.*—With a stroke of the pen, Louis Napoléon has just passed the Act for the railway from Lyons to Avignon which the Assembly had been discussing for three years. And thus it is ever. Whatever may be said, it is one of the good aspects of single-handed government that it avoids the fatal dilatoriness of parliamentary government. The Funds have risen eight francs in a week. There you have the matter in a nutshell.

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The *Coup d'État* is confirmed. The vote of the 21st December was hailed with national rejoicings, and the streets were decked with flags.

On the 31st the results were brought triumphantly to the Élysée. In the Prince's reply to M. Baroche I noticed this concise phrase :

"France has understood that I only threw over legal forms in order to secure her rights."

He also said :

"I want to extract from the occurrence of December 2nd all the good contained in it."

And again :

"The State was like a pyramid which they were trying to make stand upon its apex. I have turned it over and placed it on its base."

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Thus the year 1852 opens with the certain prospect of an Empire. It will be to-morrow, or the day after—I

mean to say in a month, or two, or six . . . hardly longer. But it will come surely.

On December 31st, 1848, I wrote: "I see rising in the distance the form of an eagle with outspread wings." On this January 1st, 1852, I can write: "The eagle is here, above our heads, a crown in his talons. It will descend in majestic flight and place this crown on the head of him who will style himself Napoleon III."

Napoleon III. . . . Morny. . . . I think of Queen Hortense. What does she say, there on the other side of the great barrier, as she sees her sons, those two children of Love, now become the two children of Glory also?





CARICATURE PORTRAIT OF THIERS AS THE NAPOLEON OF  
THE VENDÔME COLUMN.



NAPOLEON III.  
From the sketch of Count d'Orsay.



## CHAPTER VIII

### DICTATORSHIP

*January 1852*

Smith again ; a discussion on the *Coup d'État—Te Deum* at Notre Dame—Reception at the Tuileries—Fête at the Hôtel de Ville—Pétras Borel offers to paint the *Français* red—Political opponents banished ; amongst others, Victor Hugo, Raspail, Thiers, Lamoricière, Changarnier, Edgar Quinet, Rémusat, Émile de Girardin—New Constitution—Dream of Arenaberg—De Morny superseded—Reconstituted Ministry—"Trees of Liberty"—Tit for tat—Anecdote of Brunet, the actor—Confiscation of the Orleans properties.

*January 1st.*—Frenchmen, and Parisians above all, love change, but submit themselves readily to accomplished facts. The *Coup d'État* has been definitely accepted. The aspect of the Boulevards is quite sufficient proof of this. I met Smith this morning, in front of the Madeleine. He had not been in Paris for two months, and only knew by hearsay of what had taken place. I found him quite surprised at the quiet condition of the Capital ; he was especially struck by the number of shops open and filled with customers, and the signs of confidence displayed by the passers-by, many of whom were foreigners.

"It is astonishing," said he. "I could never have believed things would settle down so quickly."

"You forget, my friend, that the populace, taken as a whole, prefers a clear sky to one overcast with storms. It must be confessed that, for a long time, we have seen nothing but dark clouds. Socialism, Communism, Demagoguery, Anarchy—these had alarmed people's minds, and the party quarrels in the Assembly had added to the



scare. To the vast majority of the people, who think only of securing the safety of their own interests, the situation had become one of great tension. There was a Gordian Knot, and the Prince has severed it."

Smith made a gesture which showed that he did not agree with me.

"The method is a bad one," he interrupted. "I always condemned the 18th Brumaire; I cannot approve the 2nd of December. There were other ways—legal ways—of re-establishing order. No one has the right to fly in the face of legal forms which ought to remain inviolable. What I blame most is the manner in which the change has been effected. It supplies a fatal precedent. You told me, one day, that the ordinances of Charles X. were unjust. Well, then . . . I am sure that all honest men agree with me."

"You have expressed your own opinion, but there are others," I replied.

"Which?"

"Come with me, and I will show you the reports from the provinces. All the large towns, all the important centres of commerce and industry, even the workmen of Alsace and the South, have approved the energetic action of the Prince."

"By approval, you mean keeping silence in the presence of superior force, as when the Cannebière at Marseilles was surrounded by troops and cannon; or as at Lyons, when they knew the intentions of Castellane; or as in all those Departments which were placed in a state of siege and were kept quiet through fear of the orders issued by Saint-Arnaud to shoot down any one who offered resistance."

"A General must act as a General. The Head of a State is lost if he takes counsel with hesitation or feebleness. The outbreak was imminent, the Revolutionaries would have shrunk from no act of audacity. You have forgotten the risings in the Drôme, the Var, the Vaucluse. How were those revolts fomented? By those whose sole desire was for a general upheaval. There was a social hydra, it was necessary to strike down its heads and pre-

vent them from rising again. Besides, the stroke has been confirmed by the *plébiscite*. As Baroche said, the hour had come to deliver France from ill-omened theories, to shelter her from robbers and assassins. The Prince himself has declared that he desired one thing only—to save France, and perhaps the whole of Europe, from the terrible consequences of anarchical recklessness. You must allow he was right.”

“Madame Cornu says he was wrong.”

“I know, but Madame Cornu, whom the Prince will always esteem, whatever she may think, is only a woman. And you will admit that women understand nothing of reasons of State.”

Whereupon Smith bade me good-bye.

“You are going to see Madame Cornu?” I asked.

“Perhaps.”

“For myself, I remain with the Prince.”

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*Same date.*—Yesterday the Prince received the Diplomatic Body, the Clergy, and the Consistory. To-day he has been associated with sympathetic manifestations by the people. Early in the morning the guns at the Invalides thundered as a token of rejoicing. It was not only the celebration of the New Year, but also of deliverance from disorder. The guns fired ten shots for every million who voted “Yes” in the *plébiscite*. The salvos had not ceased when the *Te Deum* at Notre Dame began. The President was received with due solemnity. My thoughts turned, as I looked on, to the ceremony of coronation. The ritual to-day was almost as gorgeous. They sang *Domine salvum fac præsidem nostrum Napoleonem*. Thousands of voices responded.

After Divine Service a reception was held at the Tuileries, now used as the Palace instead of the Elysée. The civil and military authorities, the deputations from the departments and arrondissements, offered in turn their congratulations to the Prince. I shall never forget this imposing spectacle. The walls were hung with flags of



the national colours, in which the eagle had replaced the cock. I hail the return of the eagle. I prefer the eagle which soars aloft to the cock down in the poultry-yard. But what does not please me so well, and has aroused the indignation of my friend Delagrangé, is the decision to efface from all public buildings the motto, "Liberty, Equality, Fraternity." Why appear to announce in effect—when it is not the case—that liberty will henceforth be proscribed and fraternity trampled under foot? I omit "equality"—that utopian dream—but the other two words stand for realities. And people will make their comments.

*January 4th.*—The Préfet of the Seine is giving a ball in honour of the President of the Republic. All Paris receives Louis Napoléon at the Hôtel de Ville. All the notabilities of mercantile and commercial Paris are present at this magnificent fête. His brilliant reception is a convincing proof of the sympathy of the populace with the Prince and of its adhesion to the political régime which has just been inaugurated. I was at the fête, and I saw none but smiling countenances. The ladies wore their most elaborate toilets in honour of the President; diamonds sparkled everywhere. The ball was very animated; people felt that they were not now dancing, so to speak, over a volcano. The Minister of the Interior addressed some significant words to the Prince. I give them here, though not, perhaps, exactly as they were spoken. "Your prayers will be heard. The force on which you desire to lean for support will become consolidated. In all the events which have taken place we see the finger of Providence, and It does not stop half-way." Words could not be more explicit. In my opinion the Empire is made. If its actual arrival is postponed it is solely in order to avoid causing complications in Europe. But what would these complications amount to? At the present moment the diplomatic relations of France with other countries are as friendly as possible. All the Great Powers have instructed their representatives in Paris to testify their confidence in the Prince's policy, and to express their hope that this policy will continue to hold the anarchist



movement in check. However, no Government forgets that the Congress of Vienna in 1815 condemned for ever the Napoleonic Empire. Can it be imagined, therefore, that they will accept its restoration without protest? But why should they protest? Because they cannot understand that it is possible to restore it without war. In the view of many Sovereigns, a Napoleon III. can only be another Napoleon I., with his ambitions and his armies everywhere on the march. England, indeed, has anticipated all the other Powers in assenting to the régime inaugurated on December 2nd; but even she entertains these apprehensions—though only up to a certain point I admit. I always recall to mind that sentence in the manifesto of Lamartine: “If in the wisdom of Providence the hour seemed to have struck for the reconstruction of certain oppressed Nationalities in Europe or elsewhere; if limits or obstacles have been imposed to the reformation from inside of such and such States; if their right to ally among themselves for the consolidation of their country has been disputed by force of arms,—then the French Republic would consider itself justified in taking up arms to protect these legitimate movements towards expansion and the vindication of nationality among peoples.” It is said that the Prince’s mind is obsessed by this principle of nationalities. I know it, but, as we see, the mind of Lamartine is obsessed in the same way, not to mention George Sand, and Edgar Quinet, who has made this principle the subject of a well-known book. The Prince will always cause this principle to be respected, just as he will demand respect for the rights of France. He will not draw the sword without good cause; but, at the same time, he will not let it rust in the scabbard if events force him to take action. Already he has reminded Belgium that the seventy millions owing to France for the help given by her in 1830 at the siege of Antwerp have not yet been paid; that the hospitality too generously accorded to the detractors of the régime now established in France was an inadmissible demonstration, just as the toleration of the anti-French language of a portion of the Belgian Press constitutes an aggressive attitude of which

the French Government must demand the cessation. But that is a long way off being a declaration of war against Belgium. Nobody in France, moreover, shares the alarms and suspicions of certain foreign journals, Belgian, English, or German. Nobody in France believes in any complications arising from outside, as is proved by the fact that prices are rising on the Bourse all round, that stocks and shares have never been more actively dealt in, that a certain banking-house has made millions in the last fortnight or three weeks, that business orders are pouring in faster than they can be executed, and that merchants declare they are making their fortunes. The Treasury is in a healthy condition; and, though the National Debt has risen to 630 millions, this year's Budget will certainly show a surplus which will allow of considerable remissions of taxation. To effect this, what is required? The maintenance of order. The Prince has promised to maintain it, and he will not fail in his task.

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*January 7th.*—Paris is herself again. The Republic of 1848, in an excess of democratic zeal, thought it its duty to suppress the ancient names of the streets. The Prince is restoring them. It is an echo of his visit to the Hôtel de Ville. The Palais National resumes its historic appellation of Palais-Royal, the Académie Nationale de Musique its old title of Grand Opéra; the Théâtre de la Nation that of Théâtre Français, the name in which the habitués of Molière's play-house rejoiced. . . . On this head I recall an anecdote which has never been given to the public. In 1848, when the Théâtre Français was robbed of its ancient name, and was called the Théâtre de la Nation in virtue of the paradox that everything was national property, Pétrus Borel, daringly fantastic, the quaintly humorous author of the *Lycanthrope* and of *Madame Putiphar*, went to find the Sub-Commissary of the building, and observed to him in a serious tone :

“Sir, an idea has occurred to me. You call the Comédie Française the Théâtre de la Nation. Very



well, but you ought to paint the building red. If you like, I will undertake to get the job done by a committee of art-students, and it won't cost you a penny."

The Sub-commissary, nonplussed, promised to think the matter over. He is thinking still.

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*January 10th.*—The first convoys of deputies have departed, but there still remain some elements of revolt. To avoid any incitements to fresh disorders, the Government has determined to banish, temporarily at least, a certain number of persons violently opposed to the Prince-President and to the acts of his Government. These consist for the most part of members of the National Assembly. Some of them are already in the hulks. Sixty-seven others have been ordered to quit the country on pain of deportation—among them Victor Hugo. Others are banished provisionally: Thiers, Lamoricière, Changarnier, Edgar Quinet, Rémusat, Émile de Girardin, and a few more. There were three categories of men whose action or influence it was important to nullify: those who had openly taken part in the risings—the courts have sentenced these men to be sent to a penal colony; next, the leaders of Socialism or personal enemies of the President, who might, by their presence in France, if allowed to speak, provoke civil war—it has been decided to expel these men and to forbid their writings, if published abroad, from entering the country; as for the mere politicians from whom some subversive attempts might be feared, they have been removed pending future events. The decrees of proscription do not merely affect men judged to be dangerous in Paris, they extend also to the provinces. The Government considered this process of purification advisable, inasmuch as, in the Departments, it had been found necessary to place more than twenty thousand suspected persons under strict surveillance. The Prince, however, has granted many exemptions.

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*January 11th.*—The National Guard has been re-



organized. Constituted as it has been hitherto, it might have become an element of discord between citizens and Army. It is now becoming, on the contrary, a useful factor of Government, a support on which it can henceforth depend. The Municipal Authorities, appointed by the Government, draw up regulations for the enrolment of the new militia. Every citizen between twenty-five and fifty may be called upon to join, but the Mayor selects those who are actually enrolled, the others remaining as a possible reserve. The Government names the officers, the latter appoint their non-commissioned officers. There will be no National Guard except in those communes where the Government considers the enrolment of such a force likely to give loyal support to the authorities. This, in my opinion, is a happy idea. In this way centres can be formed of men devoted to the cause of order.

\* \* \*

*January 14th.*—The new Constitution has just been published. I have read it attentively and pondered it. Its nature might have been foreseen from the ideas which the Prince was known to entertain. I do not forget what he often used to say to me at Arenaberg and London, both before and after the attempt at Boulogne :

“ My dear d’Ambès,” he would often repeat, “ I am the heir of Napoleon I. It is my absolute duty to continue his work. As soon as I am in power I shall do all the things in which he was successful, while avoiding those which caused his overthrow. Thus my future conduct is all marked out, and I shall not deviate from it.”

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The Constitution of January 14th, 1852, is a start in the carrying out of this programme. It restores to their vigour the principles which prevailed under the Consulate and the Empire. It even adopts, word for word, the fundamental ideas of the Constitution of the year VIII. and of the Decrees of the Senate in the years X. and XII. It rests on the grand idea of 1789 which should, in the

Prince's view, be the very basis of public rights in France. This idea was embodied in its clauses. The Constituent Assembly did not, it is true, consider these latter as imperative mandates, but it recognized their logical and legitimate authority. It proclaimed the responsibility of the governing power, the right of the Representatives of the People to elaborate the laws sanctioned by the Chief of the State ; it prohibited the raising of loans or taxes without the approving vote of the Assembly, which alone had the privilege of imposing financial burdens upon the citizens ; and it proclaimed the inviolability of property and of individual liberty. The new Constitution is entirely inspired by these principles, already assented to by the Nation. It divides the legislative power between the President of the Republic, the Senate, and the Legislative Body. The President is nominated for ten years, agreeably to the Constitution of the year VIII. Should he die before the expiration of his term of office, the Senate appeals to the country to proceed to the election of a new President ; but the Chief of the State has a right to indicate, in a secret document deposited in the archives of the Senate, the name of the citizen whom he himself considers fittest to safeguard the interests of France and recommends to the confidence and suffrages of the people. A Decree of the Senate of the year X. gave the First Consul the right of designating his successor ; but the new Constitution is content to indicate a candidate to the people, leaving it quite free to choose him or not. The President's prerogatives are such as belong to and are imposed upon every Head of a State who is invested with the supreme authority and is responsible for securing the welfare of the country. Consequently the President has, save for certain specified exceptions, the right of initiative which was accorded by the Constitution of the Empire, as well as of the Revolution. The Prince-President is re-establishing this prerogative, of which the Charter of 1814 deprived the Head of the State in order to give it exclusively to the Assembly. Like the Emperor, the President thinks it right and convenient to hold the reins in his own hands. The Senate, however, is to enjoy a limited initia-



tive. It can study legislative questions of national interest, report upon its labours, and propose, should need arise, modifications and revisions of the Constitution ; but these require the assent of the President, and the decision is announced through a decree of the Senate. The revision, however, of the Constitution, which emanated from the proclamation of December 2nd and was approved by the people, will not be of legal force until it receives the sanction of a *plébiscite* adopting the reform of the constitutional laws. These latter are : The nomination of a responsible Head of the State for a period of ten years ; Ministers possessing only an executive power ; a Council of State to prepare measures and introduce them before the Legislative Body, the members of which are chosen individually by universal suffrage ; a Senate, composed of all the eminent men of the country, exercising a balancing power, and safeguarding the maintenance of the constitutional compact. The Senate will ultimately be composed of 150 members, but for the present it will be limited to 80, for the President can only entrust these lofty functions to superior men of proved loyalty, to those who already occupy the highest positions in the country, and whose rank designates them in advance for selection. The Clergy and the Army have their distinguished representatives in the Senate — Cardinals, Archbishops, Bishops ; Marshals, and similarly Admirals.

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*January 15th, 1852.*—The following scene took place yesterday between ten and eleven in the morning. I was with Mocquard, and we were talking of the Constitution which has just been promulgated and which embodies the programme of Saint-Cloud. Suddenly we saw Maupas leaving the Prince's study with an air of great agitation, but at the same time of great delight.

"It is settled," said he to Mocquard ; "Morny's goose is cooked. It was high time."

He recounted his conversation with the Prince. I knew the antipathy existing between these two men. Morny, who made money out of everything and was



always on the look out for something which would fill his pockets, needed the friendship of the Préfet de Police, for this friendship procured him valuable information on all subjects. He had been very intimate with Carlier, and wished to be on equally good terms with Maupas ; but the latter mistrusted these interested proofs of Morny's esteem, and did not throw himself into the arms of the Prince's brother. Accordingly, friendship was quickly succeeded by coolness, more especially as Maupas informed the Prince of the large sums gained on the Bourse by Morny through the events of December 2nd. Morny, in his rage, tried to injure Maupas—as he had tried to injure Persigny—so as to detach him from the Prince. He even had him spied upon by Carlier and made slanderous statements about him. Maupas, thanks to a system of counter-spying, knew all this and complained about it. He could even produce the draft of one of the reports made against him ; the draft in question was written by Carlier and annotated by Morny ! Maupas naturally took from his portfolio his act of resignation, together with the other document, and handed them to the Prince. The latter knew what to think about it. This last fact decided him.

"I have been wanting for some time to get rid of Morny," said he. "This incident hastens the solution of the matter. Take back your resignation and remain here."

A quarter of an hour later it was Morny's turn to visit the Prince. On coming out from him he advanced towards us with outstretched hands, and, with an air of great unconcern, observed to Maupas :

"Do you know what I have just been doing ?"

"Having an agreeable conversation with the Prince, no doubt," said Mocquard, with a malicious smile. "You look quite radiant."

"Yes, I am happy because I am leaving the Ministry."

"Really ?"

"I cannot spare the time, and I am rather knocked up. My health and my business affairs warn me, now that the most important of the work is done, that I ought to retire. I breathe again at last. *Au revoir*, gentlemen."

He left us, and we looked at one another.

"A very good bit of acting," sneered Mocquard.

Maupas was triumphant and finished voiding his bile.

"You see ! . . . The Prince had had quite enough of him ! Morny took too much advantage. Six weeks ago he was devoted to the Prince. He even took upon himself serious responsibilities at a crisis of affairs. But to worry the Prince as he did, almost immediately afterwards, was unworthy of a gentleman. Would you believe it ? Within a week after the bullets had ceased whistling in the streets of Paris, Morny had already demanded the Grand Cross of the Legion of Honour and the title of Duke."

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*January 22nd.*—Morny's dismissal passed almost unnoticed in the reconstruction of the Ministry effected as follows :

Minister of State : Comte de Casabianca.

Justice and Religion : Abbatucci.

Foreign Affairs : Marquis de Turgot.

War : Saint-Arnaud.

Interior : de Persigny.

Marine and Colonies : Ducos.

Police : de Maupas.

Education : Fortoul.

Finance : Bineau.

Public Works, Agriculture, and Commerce : Lefèvre-Durufé.

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They say that, in several villages, the very men who formerly planted trees in honour of Liberty have pulled them up to-day with the same passionate joy. . . .

At Limay, on the other hand, a police report declares that some one has erected on the spot from which one of these symbolical trees had been removed a white wooden cross, on which is written in pencil :

"Here lie the mortal remains of the beloved sisters Republic and Liberty, murdered on December 2, 1851,

and buried on January 17 by the Insurgent of Strasbourg and Boulogne."

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Scarcely has the *Coup d'État* been successful before greedy hands are stretched out for rewards. The Prince is beset with importunate demands. He is astonished that I have not asked for anything.

"You are the only man in France who does not want to nibble at the cake!" he said to me with a smile.

And Morny, who was present, makes a dig at me by saying jokingly :

"Sly dog! Perhaps it is in order that you should give him more than the others have got."

"I don't even envy you your post, Monsieur de Morny," I replied, giving him tit for tat.

\* \* \*

1852.—At dinner somebody mentioned Brunet, the actor, who has just died. He generally took the part of the comic simpleton. He excelled in playing the fool, though in reality he was no fool, as is proved by his becoming proprietor of the Variétés. One day, when he was giving before Queen Hortense an amusing representation of *Cadet Rousselle beau-père*, he stepped forward to utter one of his droll remarks :

"Let us never," said he, "give anything to our children if we wish them to entertain for us a gratitude equal to the benefits we have conferred on them."

The Emperor had just created his son King of Rome. Brunet, thinking he saw the Emperor frown at his remark, quickly added :

"Except when we are able to give them a throne."

Napoleon laughed, and observed to Queen Hortense :

"That man would make a good politician!"

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January 25th.—A decree has been passed for the confiscation of the property possessed in France by the Orleans family. This measure has raised a storm of



clamour among those who are opposed to the new order of things. They forget that this is merely following the example set by the Orleans themselves and also by the Bourbons. In 1832 Louis Philippe in the same manner dispossessed the Princes of the elder branch. In 1816 Louis XVIII. compelled the members of Napoleon's family to sell at six months' notice the estates which they held in France. The preamble of the decree recalls this fact. The Orleans family possessed landed property in France of the value of nearly 300 millions. This colossal fortune secured them an influence which, in the interests of the country itself, it was necessary to terminate. These estates belonged in reality to the domain of the Crown—that is to say, the State—in virtue of the ancient public rights of France and of the legislation passed under the Revolution and the Restoration. To leave them in the hands of the fallen family was to continue to supply them with the means of fomenting reaction. As a matter of fact, Orleanists and Legitimists were combining to effect a counter-revolution, and to pay for the services of a second General Monk, whom they had already selected. Pilgrimages were made to Claremont where Louis Philippe was waiting his opportunity, and to Wiesbaden where the Duc de Bordeaux had already been acclaimed as Henri V. In France itself they were corrupting artisans and peasants, by whose help they hoped to organize a fresh Royalist rising. Even the protests made from the rostrum by Berryer against the decree merely confirmed the suspicions that a reactionary movement was being engineered. A Government that is obliged to watch over its own stability must, before all things, strengthen itself against those who would undermine its foundations. When it is a question of rendering your enemies powerless you must begin by depriving them of the sinews of war. Property confiscated is but property reclaimed. The State seizes that which ought to have been restored to it, for Louis Philippe distributed among his family property of which he had the enjoyment only so long as he was Sovereign. The State could not consent to a family compact by which it was defrauded. Louis Philippe and his sons ought,

immediately after the abdication, to have arranged for the restitution of what was only in the nature of a trust. They did not do this, so the State takes the duty upon itself. The Orleans family thought to escape like the eel ; now, like the eel, they complain of being skinned.

Louis Napoléon is denounced as a robber in consequence of this decree. Who so denounces him ? Those who have robbed him themselves. The Bonaparte family had been dispossessed like the Orleans family. Did Louis Napoléon ever complain as the eels of Claremont are doing ?

## CHAPTER IX

### DICTATORSHIP (*continued*)

*February, March, 1852*

Parisian Press in 1852—Sœur Rosalie and the Cross of the Legion of Honour—Ideals of Louis Napoléon—Work for all; great building operations inaugurated—The Boulevard de Strasbourg—A stroke of genius: the Louvre and the Tuileries to be joined at last—The Prince has a kind heart; a reminiscence of Arenaberg—New medal for the Army—Plans for the amelioration of distress among the poor.

THE Press clearing the decks for action! Cries of alarm from the geese of the Capitol! Once more the Prince has followed the line of policy taken by his uncle, the First Consul. The decree of the 27 Nivôse in the year VIII. made the existence of political journals subject to the permission of the Government. Bonaparte, who had carried out the 18 Brumaire in the teeth of the chatterers, could not allow entire freedom of random speech to those who were styled the *folliculaires*. Since then the Press has taken its revenge. With the Republic of 1848 it had increased and multiplied. Its leaves had pushed forth, so to speak, like plants after a shower. Paris alone saw nearly two hundred journals produced, all of them, almost without exception, emanating from the extreme Parties. Some were destined to live only for a day or two, such as those which were devoted exclusively to feminine matters—the *Politique des Femmes*, the *Voix des Femmes*, the *Mère Duchêne*—as well as the *Tribune du Peuple*, the organ of the social democracy. After the end of June a larger number of these “ephemera” became defunct. The survivors only numbered twenty-one, eight





CARICATURES OF M. ROUHER AND OF PRINCE NAPOLEON.



of which were Republican : the *National* had as editors Léopold Duras, Caylus, André Cochut, Littré and Forgues ; the *Siècle* was in the hands of Cavaignac, the *Presse* of Girardin ; the *Avènement du Peuple*, of Victor Hugo, assisted by Eugène Pelletan ; the *Pays*, of Lamartine and Lagueronnière, the *République*, of Pierre Leroux, the *Révolution*, of Xavier Durrieu ; then there was the *Charivari*, where Taxile Delord, Clément Caraguel, and Louis Huart battled, together with those great bullies of the pencil, Daumier and Chaumier ; the Orleanists denounced the new régime in the *Ordre*, the *Messenger de l'Assemblée Nationale*, in which Thiers wrangled, and the *Journal des Débats*, to which Guizot contributed from a distance. A more formidable battlefield was the *Univers*, of Veuillot, the arch-polemist, starting with Voltaire to end with Joseph de Maistre, with all the wit of the first and all the absolutist ardour of the second. The Legitimists find their champion in the Marquis de Larochejacquelin, owner of the *Gazette de France*—in Berryer, with the *Union*, and in General de Saint-Priest with the *Opinion Publique*. The Bonapartists oppose to these the *Constitutionnel*, by Véron, and the *Pouvoir*, by Granier de Cassagnac.

There are to-day a dozen big newspapers in Paris, of which the most important are the *Constitutionnel*, the *Siècle*, the *Salut*, the *Presse*, the *Débats*, and the *Pays*, each having a sale of from ten to thirty thousand copies. The public reads daily 160,000 copies and the stamps bring in annually from two hundred and fifty to three hundred thousand francs. It is necessary to have the power, in case of necessity, to dam up this flood of printing-ink. It is a dangerous weapon. Good statesmanship assuredly dictates that this weapon should not be allowed to be directed against ourselves, but that, on the contrary, its point should be turned against our opponents. But here am I going in for polemics myself and I have no desire to do my little journey to Cayenne. Besides, I know that if once one begins fighting in print, one ends by fighting in reality.

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*February 27th.*—I hear that the Prince has bestowed upon Sœur Rosalie the Cross of the Legion of Honour. All the poor of Paris and all charitably disposed persons rejoice at his action. Sœur Rosalie is, in fact, the grand protectress of all who are in want and destitution. A Sister of St. Vincent de Paul, she has inherited the virtues of the illustrious founder of the Order. I do not believe that any of the Sisters is inspired with such a love of doing good as she is. She has quite a special art of succouring the unfortunate. Not content with helping those who come to seek relief, she goes in search of those who need it, and finds them comforts and shelter, takes in children deserted by their parents, little girls especially, and devotes herself to their education. Whenever an epidemic breaks out—and especially if it be cholera—she is to be found at the pillow of the sick, braving infection. I have written to Louis Napoléon this very day to thank him, in the name of the people of Paris, for this timely act of acknowledgment and justice.

*March 4th.*—The more carefully one applies one's self to the task of passing judgment on the work of Louis Napoléon, the more does one recognize that he is following in the footsteps of Napoleon I. I have said before, "Like uncle, like nephew." Bonaparte, in accepting the Consulate, had traced for himself a line of conduct from which he never swerved; he had seen and recognized that the safety of France lay in a régime based upon a single will, and that a country that has no master is like a ship without a pilot: it drifts at the will of the waves. The single will that is so necessary he imposed upon the State. The creation of the *Conseil d'État* enabled him to make use of all the most capable minds in the country, under his own direction. Louis Bonaparte has acted in a similar way; like the First Consul, he removed obstacles, and then bound together a combination of forces capable of supporting him, and ready to do so. At the same time he took care to secure the co-operation of the Parisians by improving and embellishing the city. That will be one of his greatest ideas. His maxim is that the prosperity of the Nation is entirely the result

of its activity. His endeavour is to leave no hands idle.

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Guizot said, "Make yourselves rich." Louis Napoléon has a different maxim: "Work." He begins by calling artisans and labourers to work. The reign of building enterprise is begun. A decree of the Prince-President's has devoted a sum of 1,670,000 francs to the opening up of a new road which will connect the Strasbourg railway station with the Boulevard Saint-Denis. Pulling down and rebuilding is begun. Now, when building is going on, everything prospers. A Palace of Industry is to be erected in the Champs-Élysées. The Lyons and Montparnasse railway stations will be completed, and steps are being taken for installing nearly twelve thousand gas-lamps.

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*March 20th.*—A stroke of genius. The Prince has decided to connect the Louvre with the Tuileries by a new construction which will take the place of the present empty space that is such an eye-sore. Napoleon I. had already intended to do this. The Prince, by reviving the project, has given delight to the whole population of Paris. All Europe admits that Paris is the most beautiful city in the world, and everything that can contribute to augment this beauty is a fresh source of pride. I can already picture these buildings rising; the design will be entrusted to the most eminent architects. The Prince intends to examine the plans himself. I know his enlightened taste, and am sure beforehand what the results will be.

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*March 21st.*—A testimony to the Prince's kindness of heart. One day, at Arenaberg, he said to me:

"My dear d'Ambès, I often think of the duty which Society owes to the unfortunate, the disinherited, and the more I reflect on this the more I am convinced that there

is still much to be done in this direction. If I should one day win power, I shall not fail to employ it in making good the deficiencies on this point.

*March 22nd.*—Yesterday the new military medals were distributed to the non-commissioned officers and privates. The Prince's address was eagerly applauded.

*March 26th.*—The Prince does not think of soldiers only. He does not lose sight of that other army—the working-classes. A decree has just appropriated a considerable sum for the improvement of workmen's dwellings in large towns. This was urgently needed. One recalls the horrors of those abominations, the cellar habitations of Lille.



## CHAPTER X

### Dictatorship : Later Days

1852

Reopening of the Chambers, at the Tuileries—The Prince lays down the Dictatorship—Delagrangé on the war-path—The President's Civil List—Rothschild and the communistic working men—The Baron d'Ambès accompanies the Prince to Sologne—A visit to Laferté-Beauharnais—Distribution of eagles to the Army in the Champ de Mars ; crowds and enthusiasm—Sale of the Galerie Soult.

*March 29th.*—The first session of the Senate and the Legislative Body was opened at the Palace of the Tuileries in the Salle des Maréchaux. A salute of a hundred and one guns announced the opening of the ceremony. I was present ; it was an imposing sight. At half-past twelve the Diplomatic Body, the Senate, and the Council of State made their entry. At one o'clock the President, preceded by the Officers of his Household, took his seat on the dais at the end of the hall, where an arm-chair had been placed. The Prince, standing and bare-headed, then addressed the Assembly in a speech which was received with respectful attention and applauded at its conclusion.

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*April 1st.*—I cannot go out of doors without running up against Delagrangé ; and every time we meet we have a lively argument.

"Well," said he to me, "I told you it meant the Empire."

"I think so too—and I can only wish it may be so."

"The Empire is an abyss, into which France will plunge."

"Pessimistic as ever."

"I must speak the truth ; and, what is so annoying, I preach only to the air. France will fall into the abyss, and she deserves her fate."

"Be calm."

"Calm ! when I see whither things are tending ? Listen to me. Everybody is mad. The whole of France is nothing but one huge Bicêtre (Bedlam). They threw poor Louis Philippe into the water, a King Log. Before the year is out we shall have a King Stork. Louis Philippe knew how to shelter himself from the storm by opening his umbrella. They have broken the umbrella, torn off the covering, and thrown away the handle. And the reason is, that we are not guided by common sense, but by imagination. We wish to revive the Napoleonic epoch at all costs. To what will that lead us ? Into disastrous war. Oh, yes ! I know your Prince has nothing but words of peace upon his lips. . . . He will be forced to alter his tune presently. France does not want peace. If she had wanted it, she would not have driven out Louis Philippe, the most pacific ruler she has ever had. But for him and his moderation our troops would have encamped on the Vistula when the 'hot-heads' were shouting 'Vive Poland !' at the top of their voices ; they would have encamped in Cairo to help Mehemet Ali ; they would have marched to London to demand the restoration of the 'Pritchard' indemnity. Louis Philippe was the true pilot, who could steer his vessel safely among the reefs, and they pitched him overboard. And why ? To have a Republic. What Republic ? Lamartine's ? or Ledru-Rollin's ? A poetic Republic, with a fantastic programme and utopian institutions ? Or the Republic of the *Mountain*, with the return of the Convention, and the croaking of all the frogs in the pool of the Assembly ? As for the Republicans, we have seen them at work. How many were there who knew what they wanted ? Long sighted persons, and short-sighted. The former jumping to conclusions, the

others keeping their noses glued to their speeches. I heard their charlatans' promises! Chemist's recipes, that were to melt up the country in a new crucible! Messiahs perched upon the mountain to make their sermons heard and their promises to make the whole world happy! My ears are weary of hearing all this mystic talk, this prating about the people—The people? Their heads have been stuffed full of nonsense. They have been told so often: 'It is *you* who are sovereign; now that you have universal suffrage, it is *you* who will be the master.' Universal suffrage—that Tree of Life and of the knowledge of good and evil which, like that of Liberty, should burst into abundant foliage—blessed by the Church, acclaimed by the boobies, and now withered, uprooted, thrown to the winds! The Republic! The people did not want one. It was represented to them as a cup at which they might drink till they were intoxicated—for the Sovereign People likes to drink,—might drink nectar and eat the ambrosia which would render them immortal,—above all, drink glory, which would make them dizzy with pride. Yes, the French people cannot do without *that* dizziness. The first Napoleon fed them on it to repletion, and so they turn again to the Napoleons. And when they elected the nephew they were really voting for the uncle, like the woman who runs off with a second husband only in order that she may think more about the first, as the widowed Dido in the arms of Æneas."

"The Prince——" I interrupted.

"Your Prince does not exist," exclaimed Delagrange.

"If he had merely been called Charles, instead of Napoleon, his name would never even have come out of the urn. Had Cavaignac been called Napoleon, it is *he* whom they would have chosen, for Cavaignac is a 'sword,' and the people want a sword. If your Prince is not a sword, he will get smashed up at the first encounter, like Louis Philippe's umbrella. The people want a sword like that of the *Joseph Prud'homme* Henri Monnier is going to give at the Odéon—a sword to be used to defend our institutions, or, if need be, to attack them. And it is because your Prince has held this language that



he has won the *plébiscite*. Your Prince? What do they want him to do? to copy faithfully the example of Napoleon.

"He *will* copy him, or they will sweep the floor of him.

"He has ranged himself on the side of the broom. Perhaps I should have done the same. When one wants to copy Napoleon I. and become Napoleon III., one begins with an 18 Brumaire. It is done; I expected it. Here you have the Assembly suppressed, the Republicans crushed, some sent to the galleys at Cayenne and Lambessa, some driven to Belgium and London. The Consulate was a stepping-stone; the Presidency will be the same. We are on the first step of the throne, and we shall climb to it, you will see. I tell you, we shall hear these proclamations of peace followed immediately by a declaration of war. And the French people will not be satisfied until they have once more followed the tricolour in a progress through Europe, until they have had another Marengo, another Wagram, another Austerlitz. But do you know whither these triumphal roads lead? To Waterloo? To St. Helena?"

"You are misanthropic."

"Possibly; to be friendly to the human race is by no means my forte, I admit it. You let yourself be deceived by a mirage, as all Frenchmen do, and you fill your pockets with white stones to mark the days with, whereas *I* mark them with black ones; that is the difference between us.

"But remember this. Your Prince is like a man who has come into an inheritance, and, to keep his inheritance, he must submit to all the conditions contained in the will. He dipped *one* foot into crime on December 2nd; he will dip the *other* foot before long. And even then he will find a majority to back him up, for glory atones for everything. So long as he pays court to glory, he will be the people's master and their idol."

We were in front of the Bourse, and I looked at the clock. Delagrangé had been talking for two hours, and I saw that his flow of speech showed no signs of being

exhausted. I pretended an engagement, and we separated. He is certainly a man with whom I should never hit it off.

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*April 2nd.*—A decree of the Senate fixes the civil list of the President of the Republic at twelve million francs. The committee of the Senate, in recommending this sum, had in view the position of the Head of a great people which clings to its ancient traditions. The country intends that the man who has saved the State, and in whom it has shown its confidence by a manifestation unexampled in history, should represent it worthily in the supreme magistracy with which it has invested him. It wishes him to inhabit the Palace of its ancient Sovereigns, to exercise the hospitality of France on a noble scale, to encourage science, art, and literature, which minister to her glory, and to hold out a helping hand to the distressed.

In this important part of his great mission, Prince Louis Napoléon will, we know, respond worthily to the wishes of France.

It belongs to the Senate to secure to him by its vote the means of doing this.

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I know beforehand how the Prince will employ his official income, namely, in reviving trade by giving entertainments at the Tuileries. Paris lives by luxury and official expenditure. I hear short-sighted moralists exclaiming: "Twelve millions for a single individual when there are so many poor! If only these twelve millions could be distributed among those who are in want!" That recalls to my mind a story I have heard related more than once. It was in 1848. There was much talk about sharing of wealth, and many people were convinced that all owners of property were going to be compelled to divide it among the masses. Two workmen, imbued with this idea, called upon Rothschild on one of those June days.

"Citizen, you ought to do like the rest, and share with those who have nothing."

"Willingly," said Rothschild calmly, ringing the bell for his cashier. "Here is the man who will satisfy your claims."

Then, addressing the cashier, he asked :

"What is the actual amount of our cash in hand?"

"One hundred and eight millions, Baron."

"Very well."

He took up a volume from the table.

"Here is the latest statistical report. According to the last census, the total population of France amounts, in round numbers, to thirty-six millions. Your share works out at three francs each. Here they are, and sign a receipt for them."

The workmen were dumbfounded at this rigorously exact calculation.

The distribution of the twelve millions of the Civil List would produce even a more meagre result.

The advocates of distribution are mere visionaries. You cannot make the poor rich by giving them forty or fifty pence a head, but by giving them work. Help by supplying work—that is Louis Napoléon's idea. It was one of his projects when he lived at Arenaberg, and he will presently put it into execution.

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*April 21st.*—The Prince sent for me this morning. "My dear d'Ambès," said he, "I want a travelling companion. Information which has reached me has decided me to visit the Sologne. It is a district which, it appears, produces little, but which is capable of being cultivated to advantage. I wish to go there *incognito*, but I do not want to trust to my own eyes, and, on the other hand, I prefer not to be accompanied by any official personage or by any over-zealous adviser. Come with me; we will start at once, and, so far as is possible, without any one knowing of our movements."

We have made the expedition, and I have given him my opinion. The Sologne is, in fact, though so



close to the prosperous Berry, a poor, unhealthy district, liable to breed fever, which ravages the population. I believe, with the Prince, that there are ways of making it more healthy. He thinks of buying land there, on which to conduct experiments. Didn't I say that the Civil List would not be wasted !

We made a detour to Laferté-Beauharnais, where stands the ancient seigniorial mansion of Louis Napoléon's grandfather, and where the father of Queen Hortense resided before he was sent to the scaffold.

The Prince had a wish to revisit these places of which he had heard stories from his mother. He spoke to me of the Revolution, and of those who had been its victims.

"The Revolution," said he, "contained grand ideas, and was inspired by the highest principles, but it did not take sufficiently into account the true tendencies which should be instilled into the Nation. You cannot establish any durable government on terror. Victor Hugo was right when he wrote :

"Le sang n'est pas une bonne rosée ;  
 Nulle moisson ne vient sur la grève arrosée."<sup>1</sup>

And the Prince added :

"Victor Hugo is a great poet ; it is unfortunate that he should have wanted to dress his Muse in a red cap."

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*May 10th.*—I was present in the Champ de Mars at the distribution of standards ; there was an enormous crowd ; the trains had brought thousands of spectators from the provinces. Louis Napoléon has revived the magnificent ceremony of May 1815, and, like the Emperor, has reminded the troops of the glorious significance of these emblems.

In front of the Military School, and reaching to its

<sup>1</sup> Blood is not a fertilizing dew ;  
 No harvest grows upon the soil that is so watered.

first floor, had been erected a monumental frieze of gilt oak-leaves, with a medallion in the centre inscribed with the figures 7,500,000, the number of votes obtained by the Prince-President. Two other medallions with the words "Vox populi, vox Dei" completed the decoration. Behind the Prince stood the members of his family and the Diplomatic Body. The High Altar erected in the centre of the Champ de Mars dominated the scene.

All Paris and the suburbs, as well as the Departments bordering on the Seine, had assembled to witness the evolutions of the troops. The Mass was followed with reverent attention. The President then reviewed the army on horseback, amid cries of "Vive Napoléon!"

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*May 13th.*—A series of fêtes: the day before yesterday, a ball given to the army of Paris by the President of the Republic—a splendid assemblage of dazzling uniforms and brilliant toilets. You could read in the women's eyes how ardent they are for the military glory of France. Yesterday, a banquet of eight hundred covers at the Tuileries, given to the superior officers. To-day, a banquet of two thousand four hundred covers given to the Military School. Soldiers who have received medals were present.

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*May 21st.*—For three days the sale of Marshal Soult's pictures has been going on. This collection had a world-wide reputation. It included masterpieces of the Spanish School. They are falling for the most part into the hands of foreigners. I cannot imagine why a subscription has not been organized to keep all these treasures in the country. The Soult collection presented a synthesis of the art of the great Spanish painters, which it will now be impossible ever to bring together again. All these pictures belonged to a great, though short, period of history, a period of dazzling brilliancy. Soult acquired them by conquest as much as by purchase; in his campaigns he never neglected any opportunity of enriching his collec-



tion. Wherever he met a work worthy of notice, he became the possessor of it, very often on ridiculously easy terms, because, in that country which was still closed to the greed of antiquaries and amateurs, the value of the canvases was not accurately known, and also because nobody ventured to haggle with a purchaser who had an army at his back. Besides, he did not confine himself to purchasing; when the Monks of some Religious House that possessed a Murillo, a Zurbaran, or a Ribera, were arrested for complicity in some plot, for participation in the murder of French soldiers, or in some rising, and had in consequence of these acts incurred the penalty of death, the Marshal would instruct his agents to inform the authorities of the Monastery that the prisoners might be released on certain conditions to be kept secret, and the Murillos, the Zurbarans, and the Riberas ceased to adorn their walls. Napoleon, when informed of these proceedings, often expressed his displeasure, but though he knew very well who was the author of them, he did not punish Soult, whose sword was necessary to him. So long as the Marshal remained beyond the Pyrenees, his collection continued to increase; he obstinately refused, however, to allow visitors a sight of the pictures, which he had arranged in a gallery at his house in Paris. Occasionally, he appeared ready to listen to offers of purchase from the Louvre; but the prices he asked were so exorbitant that Louis Philippe declared one day in a fit of annoyance: "Well then, let him keep them." The Louvre was the more easily consoled because it already possessed a certain number of Spanish paintings which were the admiration of experts as well as of the ordinary public, who would gaze fascinated on these masterpieces which had belonged to the family of Orleans, and had been handed over by them to the Museum. After the Revolution of 1848, these pictures were restored to them, and the Louvre now contained no more than about a dozen Spanish canvases. The Louvre might have filled up the deficiency by becoming the highest bidder at the Marshal's sale, and it is a great pity that it did not do so, for these pictures are of incomparable beauty.



The sale created some surprises. Murillo's masterpiece, "The Conception," was keenly disputed for by the Spanish Ambassador and Lord Hereford. The Comte de Nieuwerkerke, on behalf of the Louvre, offered 150,000 francs, but the bidding continued to advance. Finally, victory rested with the Louvre for 586,000 francs. If the *Patrie* is to be believed, a banker gave 150,000 francs for the "St. Peter in Prison," on behalf of the Emperor of Russia. In all, the sale produced 1,467,350 francs. So here is this superb collection scattered to the winds. Happily the Louvre has the gem. Spain would have liked to win it back, and Castilian pride will no doubt suffer from the disappointment.

## CHAPTER XI

Dictatorship : Later Days (*continued*)

*June—September 1852*

Death of Sculptor Pradier—Alfred de Musset joins the "Immortals"—Funeral of Eugène Burnouf—A Statistical Department established—The Baron d'Ambès a Socialist—Strassburg railway opened—The Prince visits the Rhine country—Popular enthusiasm—Opinion in the Provinces—Death of the Duke of Wellington—Anecdote of the Iron Duke.

*June 4th.*—Pradier died last night. He had gone on an excursion to Bougival with his daughter and her governess. Several of his pupils had accompanied them. He had an apoplectic fit, and fell down in the street. He was carried into a house, and a doctor was speedily on the spot and bled him. But it was too late, and the illustrious sculptor expired before nightfall. He was only sixty-two. He was the most universally known and admired of our artists. He was born at Geneva, and at an early age displayed his artistic tastes. His parents wished him to become an engraver, but Denon, who knew the family, persuaded them to send him to the studio of Lemot. It was advice that might well have been injurious to the pupil rather than advantageous. Lemot, who had no sense of the beautiful—as is proved by his equestrian statue of Henri IV. and his sculptures in the Louvre—possessed no real merit. But he surpassed all his contemporaries in his handling of the boasting-tool and the chisel. He was a skilful executant, certainly superior to Chaudet and Cartellier in the practice of his art, but he was a man who worked conscientiously, and nothing more.

In a few months, young Jacques Pradier became intimate with Lemot, who taught him all his secrets, without, however, quenching the spark of his genius. At the age of twenty-one, he competed for the Prix de Rome and won a gold medal. The following year, in 1813, his bas-relief of "Ulysses and Melpomene" was exhibited in the Medici Academy. During five years' residence in Rome he was indefatigable, steeping himself in the antique, but concerning himself only with form, and shutting his eyes to the beauties of the Renaissance, with a veritable contempt for Michael Angelo. Returning to Paris in 1818, he found himself the object of Royal favour. Louis XVIII., Charles X., and Louis Philippe overwhelmed him with orders. He was appointed Chevalier of the Legion of Honour and Member of the Académie des Beaux Arts. He was worshipped by all, by the general public no less than by connoisseurs, though this did not prevent his bust of Charles X. from being broken to pieces in 1830, nor that of Louis XVIII. from being mutilated. At the age of fifty he had achieved great fame, but had also come in for severe criticism: he was blamed for too strict an adherence to the antique, and for trying to force nature to adapt itself to the style of Phidias and Praxiteles. He was a greedy reader of the classics: one day, after plunging into Ovid's *Metamorphoses*, he wanted to represent them in marble, naïvely declaring that he was the only man capable of realizing such a design. The rough models that he made for this purpose showed that he had abandoned none of his faults. He persisted, for example, in attaching only a secondary importance to the heads of his statues, declaring that this part of the body mattered little, and that all one's attention ought to be devoted to the modelling of the limbs. His "Louis XVIII.," among others, is the most pronounced example of this paradox. But the error appears equally in the best of his works in imitation of the antique. His "Phryné," his "Flora," his "Atalanta," and, in a special degree, his "Prometheus," are faulty in their grouping. His "Phidias," for instance, is not the Phidias shown us in history, but a robust workman hewing marble of Paris rather than of Paros. His





COMPIÈGNE, FROM THE GARDENS.



"Sappho," which is to figure this season in the Exposition Universelle, is a replica in marble of the same statue first in bronze, then in ivory and silver ; but these three works seem to me to leave much to be desired. The mistress of Phaon is seated on the sea-shore, her hands on her knees, in painful meditation ; but, instead of portraying despair, her expression only denotes boredom. In religious subjects, Pradier achieved but little success. His "Pietà," borrowed from Michael Angelo's in St. Peter's at Rome, leaves us cold ; his "Dead Christ" betrays no agony, his "Virgin" no sorrow. Nor do I like any better his monumental works, his goddesses of Glory or his Muses on the Molière Fountain, which to my mind represent rather two ladies of easy virtue. Nor can I like his goddesses of Victory on the Tomb of Napoleon, which Drolling found so little to his taste that he exclaimed : "To assert that these are the work of Pradier is to calumniate his genius." In short, I pretty much share the opinion of him expressed by Planche : "In execution, he has no rival ; in composition, he is inferior to every one." And yet Planche ranks him very highly. I remember one of our great painters visiting his studio whom he had invited to inspect his "Phidias" ; the painter, having looked at it for a considerable time, went off without saying a word. Pradier understood the silence, but, though he had invited the criticism, he could not forgive it. Spots do not obscure the brightness of the sun. Pradier was after all a great artist, and many of his works will live, and they are very numerous, for he worked with feverish rapidity. Hardly had he the model before him ere he translated it into marble, taking especial delight in colossal figures six feet in height, and producing in a week what would have taken another man a month to execute. This devouring activity enabled him to turn out so much work that he became wealthy. His goddesses of Victory brought him in 240,000 francs, if I am not mistaken. When one speaks of him, there is but one thing to regret, and that is, that he ever entered the studio of Lemot.

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*May 27th.*—Admission of Alfred de Musset into the French Academy. He succeeds Dupaty, which is something like the sun's light succeeding that of the moon, as Aurélien Scholl, with his sharp tongue, observed to me. He puts on the green robe at the Institute after wearing it three years ago with Augier at the Variétés. Augier bides his time, and will presently claim his turn to cross the Pont des Arts and don the academic gown.

His "Gabrielle" will win that honour for him. Musset has for long had a claim to this chair. I know that the Prince-President desired his election. George Sand procured for him the votes of Lamartine and Sainte-Beuve. Up to the last moment Musset doubted if he would be successful. Nobody knows better than he that beneath the dome of the Academy, as in life in general, there's many a slip 'twixt the cup and the lip.

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*May 28th.*—After the service at Saint-Sulpice, I followed to Père-Lachaise the funeral of Eugène Burnouf, one of the glories of French erudition; he has endowed France and the world of learning with discoveries which render him deserving of the highest admiration. The founder of Oriental studies, he solved the very complicated problem of the Buddhist texts and of the Sanskrit and Persian writings, thus opening up Asia to Europe. All the men of eminence were assembled round his grave. There were deputations from the Collège de France, the École Normale, the Sorbonne, the Bibliothèque Nationale, the École des Chartes, the École Polytechnique, the Imprimerie Nationale, and the Institut. I saw there Thénard, Biot, Boissonnade, de Quincy, Cousin, Hase, Naudet, Mohl, Élie de Beaumont, Littré, Lenormant, Barthélemy Saint-Hilaire, and savants from Germany, England, and even Persia. The Prince-President sent a representative. Burnouf had only a fortnight ago been appointed Permanent Secretary of the Académie des Inscriptions et Belles Lettres in place of Walckenaer. We thus suffer an almost irreparable loss in the death of one whose reputation was so great not only in France but

abroad. I have always followed his work with eager interest, my father having taught me never to neglect any branch of intellectual activity.

“A savant,” he would say, “is like the farmer who sows seed in the ground. The seed germinates and gives the promise of a nourishing harvest. Science is a no less profitable nourishment.”

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*July 1st.*—A Decree of the Senate creates the Statistical Commission. This is a useful step, and I approve of it.

“With the object of establishing on a permanent basis an exact statistical statement of the moral and economic condition of France, a Statistical Commission, the members of which are appointed by the Préfet, is set up in the chief town in each canton. Each Commission will be expected to fill up, and keep correct to date, two tables drawn up by the Minister of Agriculture and Commerce. These two tables will contain a series of questions : the first, on such matters as the Government ought to be informed of every year ; the second, on such matters as by their nature need to be answered only once in five years. At the end of their respective periods, these tables will be exhibited for a month in a room at the Town Hall, where every one will be at liberty to examine them and enter their observations in a special register.”

I am not of the opinion of those who assert that the collection of statistics serves no purpose but that of maintaining a certain number of officials. No, statistics are, so to speak, a light thrown upon the truth. When it is ascertained through statistics how many poor there are in France, and how many rich, it will perhaps be possible to introduce a fairer method of taxation. But there, I look like becoming a Socialist !

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*July 17th.*—One of the necessary conditions of peace is the maintenance of friendly relations between Nations. A good understanding ought to subsist, above all between



those that are near neighbours. It is all to the interest of France to live on good terms with Germany. To cement these amicable relations, the project of connecting the two countries by a line of railway had already been considered under the government of Louis Philippe. The line from Paris to Strassburg was ordered to be completed. The work was begun seven years ago, but the downfall of the Monarchy, in 1848, interrupted its continuance. The scheme has now been revived, thanks to the initiative of the Prince, who presided to-day at the inauguration of the line. On the completion of the ceremony, he left Paris to go to the Rhine. I travelled in the Presidential train.

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*July 20th.*—We were received everywhere with enthusiastic ovations. It was no welcome made to order ; spontaneous delight showed itself in all faces. At Nancy, where they gave us a splendid reception, an envoy from the King of Prussia congratulated Louis Napoléon. Méry, the poet and historian of the journey, writes in the *Moniteur* : “It was an intoxication !” He is right. I, who witnessed the scene, affirm the genuineness of the popular greeting. At Strassburg, we had the indescribable spectacle of a procession of hundreds of carriages filled with young girls who showered flowers upon us. The carriages were escorted by cavaliers in the national costume of Alsace. The Prince was much affected. His thoughts recurred to the day when he affirmed his right to the heritage of Napoleon, and he was visibly delighted at this confirmation of what he had then foreseen. He has now been able to convince himself that his destinies are interwoven with those of the whole of France. His presence at Strassburg is a triumph, as is proved by the acclamations on his arrival and at his departure. On his return to Paris he was greeted with similar acclamations. I do not believe that any Head of a State has ever felt the heart of a country beat in such intimate sympathy with his own.

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*September 14th.*—The revival of the Councils-General, and the declarations made by them, have convinced the Prince-President that France is with him. These declarations express, in fact, the sentiments of the Nation. Of the total number, seventy-four demand either the Empire or some stable form of government ; the majority of them wish to maintain Louis Napoléon in power, without fixing any limit to the duration of his term of office. In this condition of affairs, it seems desirable that the Head of the State, in order to make even more secure the confidence reposed in him, should place himself in direct contact with the populations of the various towns. The Prince has decided to do this, and has left Paris to-day in order to visit the Departments in the Centre and the South. But I must admit that there are some apprehensions as to this journey. Nobody is ignorant of the fact that, even though the people, through the *plébiscite*, pronounced in favour of Louis Napoléon, there are many provincial towns which have strong leanings to the “white” or the “red.” At Nevers and at Moulins, through which we shall pass—I am of course one of the party—we shall find hotbeds of Socialism ; at Roanne, Saint-Etienne, Lyons, and Grenoble we shall perhaps see the red flag hoisted ; at Angers and Marseilles, the white flag. Toulon, like the other sea-ports, has cherished faithfully the remembrance of the Prince de Joinville ; Toulouse remains Orleanist ; Nîmes, Legitimist ; while Bordeaux would be ready to hail the advent of the Comte de Paris. It is important, therefore, to conciliate these diverse populations, and to assure them, by the mouth of the President himself, that they may count upon his entire solicitude for their welfare.

*Undated.*—I note from day to day the impressions received. At Bourges, our first stopping-place, an immense crowd ; repeated shouts of “Vive Napoléon ! Vive l'Empereur !” At Nevers, similar demonstrations as the train went by—flags at all the stations—and if we alight, we make our entry into the town beneath triumphal arches bearing the most significant inscriptions. At Lyons, indescribable enthusiasm ! the Prince unveils an

equestrian statue of Napoleon I., and delivers an address received with frantic applause.

\* \* \*

*September 15th.*—The English newspapers announced yesterday the death of Wellington—a grave event for England, and one that will find an echo in Europe. It was not known that he was ill. He was eighty-three years old, and was born in the same year as Napoleon I., which caused the remark to be made, at a later date, and after Waterloo, by Louis XVIII. : “Providence raised up at one and the same time the man who was to do the greatest harm to the Bourbons and the man who was to render them the greatest service.” Wellington, in spite of his great age, had remained active and vigorous ; so much so, indeed, that only a few years ago there was talk of the possibility of his marrying Miss Burdett Coutts.<sup>1</sup> In the House of Lords, where he attended very regularly, his speeches on the Army and on military questions testified, even in his last years, to his great vigour of mind. He seemed to have nine lives.

I need not relate his life, which is known from all that historians have written about it. But Smith has told me some details gathered from the Duke’s dependents. He visited Walmer Castle and saw the room in which the Duke breathed his last. The extreme simplicity of the furniture and the absence of all luxury testified to his parsimonious tastes. He slept on a camp-bed, at the side of which was a small table littered with books, some poetical, some historical. Near the bed stood a large arm-chair with its back against the window, and two old wooden chairs. From the window, which overlooks the street, could be seen in the distance the coast of France.

Here is an amusing story which might furnish the subject for a novel entitled *Wellington’s First Pipe*. He detested tobacco. The Duke of Cumberland, subsequently King of Hanover, wished to convert him to the

<sup>1</sup> I have mentioned the fact before that at one time there was some notion of a marriage between Louis Napoléon and this lady. Wellington, the uncle’s rival, was now become the nephew’s.

cult of nicotine. By arrangement with some friends, the Duke of Cumberland plotted to effect the forced conversion.

It was at Portsmouth; there was a great dinner, which was to be followed by smoking. Wellington, suspecting something, announced his wish to take leave. But the Duke of Cumberland had engaged all the post-horses—there were no railways yet—and Wellington had to resign himself to circumstances. He was given his liberty only on condition that he smoked. It was his first pipe—and his last.



## CHAPTER XII

### EVE OF THE EMPIRE

*October, November, 1852*

France agog for the Empire—Tour in the South—At Grenoble—Banquet at Bordeaux—The Prince pardons Abd-el-Kader—Delagrangé: "Who made the Empire? '*I did*,' says Thiers"—Momentous deliberations in the Senate—Report of the Commission for reforming the Constitution—The eight Articles—Recommend the re-establishment of the Hereditary Empire—Discussed and approved—The dreams of Arenaberg come true.

*October 1st.*—Yes, all France is possessed by the fever of Empire. Yes, Louis Napoléon is the "Man of Providence." Wherever he goes he is implored to place on his head the crown of Napoleon I. Any apprehensions which might still exist are dissipated. Even in the manufacturing centres which till lately belonged to the demagogues and "Reds," and where the events of December 2nd had been the most fiercely opposed, there has been no exception to the general rule of the enthusiasm shown for the Prince. Everybody now freely shouts, "Vive l'Empereur!" At Lyons, the delegates of the Red Cross have given in their adherence unreservedly. The *Moniteur* has declared: "The Empire has become a necessity. Louis Napoléon is supported by the army, by the clergy—who recognize in him not only the elect of the Nation, but the restorer of its altars; the Magistracy honours in his person the man who will render to justice all its prerogatives and all its prestige. The Nobility rally round him. It realizes that he has only seized the reins in order to prevent anarchy

from overturning the car of State into the ditch and the mud. The lower orders are pleased with him for having restored credit and given an impetus to industry and commerce. The Army, on which he has leaned for the saving of France from disorder, counts on him, as he can count on it. The country districts know that his government spells prosperity." I read in a local journal this very expressive sentence : "The people have a clear and precise instinct for their true interests. They know that to uphold the power of the Head of the State is, after all, to work for their own advantage. France is profoundly convinced that the return of the Imperial era means the revival of glory, of industrial wealth, and of moral greatness in the eyes of Europe. In confiding to Louis Napoléon the guardianship of the future, she knows in what safe hands she is placing it." These are words to be remembered. Accordingly I transcribe them here, that they may be found again some day in these memoirs as a daguerreotype of the opinions held about the Prince.

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*Undated.*—From Lyons we went on to Grenoble, where the memory of the return from the Isle of Elba still lives fresh in men's minds : triumphal arches, flowers, flags in the windows, and ovation after ovation. I noticed some of the inscriptions : "Here the Emperor stopped on 9th of March, 1815." "Here the people took the horses from Napoleon's carriage and drew it." Several streets were transformed into floral avenues ; every village in the Department had its street lined with men with drums and flags, and its delegation headed by the clergy.

\* \* \*

*September 25th.*—After Grenoble came Valence, Avignon, Marseilles, Toulouse, then Marseilles again, Aix, Nîmes, Montpellier, Narbonne. Enormous crowds throughout the whole route. In one town the enthusiastic crowd might reach such a figure as 100,000, in another 150,000, or even 200,000, men, women, and

children : at Aix the President attended the revival of the Tournay of the good King René ; at Nîmes he witnessed a bull-fight ; at Arles a theatrical performance in the amphitheatre. The Prince is prodigal of gifts. He knows to whom to give presents and how to choose them : the ladies receive diamonds, the poor thirty francs per family, the Church endowments ; Marseilles gets an entire Cathedral, of which he lays the foundation-stone.

At Toulouse occurred a touching incident. The Archbishop, Monseigneur Miolaud, was formerly Bishop of Amiens, and had visited the prisoner of Ham. This venerable Prelate paid his homage to the President, who reminded him of this circumstance, unforgettable by either of them ; and I saw by their looks how much they were affected by the thought of how destiny pursues its course in spite of human opposition. I myself was moved at the remembrance, for I had known all about the visit which the Bishop paid the Prince during his imprisonment.

\* \* \*

*October 9th.*—The Chamber of Commerce and the Tribunal of Commerce of Bordeaux have given in honour of the Prince-President a banquet, which allowed him an opportunity of expressing his thoughts on the revival of the Empire, and of letting it be known what France and Europe had to expect in regard to this restoration so eagerly awaited, as was clearly proved throughout the whole of the President's progress.

\* \* \*

*October 15th.*—The Prince, pursuing his progress, wished to go to Amboise, the Castle of which town is utilized as a prison for Abd-el-Kader. Here is a cutting from the *Moniteur* : "The Prince has signalized the end of his progress by a great act of justice and national generosity in restoring to liberty the Ex-Emir Abd-el-Kader. He has had this act for a long time in his thoughts, and wished to put it into execution as soon as circumstances would allow him to follow the dictates



of his heart without the possibility of danger to the country. To-day France has too much confidence in her own strength to feel unable to act with generosity towards a vanquished foe."

The Ex-Emir expressed to the Prince-President his respectful and eternal gratitude, and swore on the sacred book of the Koran that he will make no attempt to disturb our rule in Africa, and will submit himself unreservedly to the wishes of France. He added that to suppose the Koran permits the violation of engagements entered into with Christians would be to show an ignorance both of the letter and the spirit of the law of the Prophet, and he showed the Prince a verse of the sacred book which condemns without exception any one who breaks his sworn faith, even with infidels.

In the eyes of all intelligent Arabs the conquest of Algeria is to-day an accomplished fact ; they see in the constant superiority of our arms a striking manifestation of the will of God.

Loyalty and generosity in politics is the only conduct befitting a great Nation ; France will be grateful to the Prince for having shown these qualities.

\* \* \*

*October 16th.*—We return to Paris. The train stops at the Orleans Station. I see assembled on the arrival platform all the great bodies of State, the clergy represented by the Archbishop, Monseigneur Sibour, his Vicars-General, and a large number of priests, the Protestant Consistory, the Jewish Consistory with the Chief Rabbi, all the Magistrates, and the delegates of the schools. I hear salvos of artillery, pealing of bells, blowing of bugles. The President alights from the train and embraces his uncle, King Jérôme, and afterwards M. de Morny. They are evidently reconciled. I listen to the shouts. From all mouths, as from all hearts, comes the cry of "Vive l'Empereur !"

We pass beneath a magnificent triumphal arch erected in the Place Valhubert. The address of welcome, spoken by M. Berger, contains the following sentence :

"Yield, Monseigneur, to the wishes of an entire people. Providence lends its voice, and bids you terminate the mission with which it has entrusted you by assuming the crown of the immortal founder of your dynasty."

The Prince replied :

"The wishes that you voice, in the name of the city of Paris, render me all the more happy, in that the acclamations with which I am welcomed here are but the continuation of those which have greeted me throughout my journey.

"If France desires the Empire, it is because she thinks that form of government is the best guarantee of her greatness and her future.

"As for myself, under whatever title it is given me to serve her, I shall consecrate to her all my strength and my devotion."

\* \* \*

October 20th.—Delagrange—I cannot avoid the man—buttonholes me in the Gardens of the Luxembourg. We said little about the President, but a great deal about the Empire which is so close at hand. Indeed I pull him up each time he bolts away on this subject.

"There, leave the Prince alone," I say. "He is not the man for you—be it so—but he is the man for me. We shall never agree."

"Well," he replied, "let us come to Thiers. It is he who is the coming man. Do you know what he is doing now? He is continuing his *History of the Consulate and the Empire*; that is to say, he has gone back to his favourite pursuits. This saying of his was repeated to me: 'The Empire is made, yes; but who made it? Would people have had the least idea about Napoleon I. but for my work, and is it not the monument which I have been rearing to him during the last twelve years which has made the people so eager to revive the glories of France under his rule, and which has persuaded them that this glory is embodied in Louis Napoléon?' You want to know Thiers very intimately to know exactly what he is saying behind the mask; with that nasal voice



of his that seems to pierce the drum of your ear he can secure an audience whenever he chooses : his short stature, which makes him look in the rostrum like a jack-in-the box, has not hindered him from being considered a great man. Further, he has inspired belief in his talents as a politician. If you are to believe him, he has outdone Richelieu, Louis XIV., Napoleon. How the great Cardinal, the great King, the great Emperor must laugh in the Elysian Fields when they see this little jay of Provence decked out in his peacock's feathers. You ask where he is at this moment. Search the back scenes ; there is his usual field of action. He is convinced that the Empire, if it is revived, will be but the preparatory step to a further Restoration. I even believe that he was at Claremont before the death of Louis Philippe, and that the old King wrote his political testament in concert with him. Meanwhile, Thiers, ever sprightly, casts sheep's-eyes at the Republic. He dreams of making a conquest in that direction. But Louis Napoléon, to whom he would fain lend his co-operation, will act wisely in keeping him at arm's length. He has made a mistake in setting him at liberty after imprisoning him at Mazas. I believe, for my part, that this chameleon is extremely dangerous ; but he is not the only one."

I attach but slight importance to these prognostications of Delagrange's, and yet . . .

\* \* \*

*November 8th.*—Three days of memorable sittings of the Senate.

On the 6th inst. the Senate met under the chairmanship of Vice-President Ménard, to listen to the report of the Commission charged with examining into the proposed modification of the Constitution, conformably to Articles 31 and 32.

I confine myself to copying the scheme of the Decree of the Senate which has resulted from it.

Art. I.—The Imperial dignity is re-established. Louis Napoléon Bonaparte is Emperor under the title of Napoleon III.



Art. II.—The Imperial dignity is hereditary, descending to the direct and legitimate heirs of Louis Napoléon Bonaparte in order of primogeniture, and to the perpetual exclusion of females and their descendants.

Art. III.—Louis Napoléon Bonaparte, in default of heirs male, may adopt the children and legitimate descendants, in the male line, of the brothers of the Emperor Napoleon I.

The forms of adoption are regulated by a Decree of the Senate.

If, subsequently to such adoption, Louis Napoléon should beget male children, his adopted sons can only be called to succeed him after the death of such legitimate descendants.

Adoption is forbidden to the successors of Louis Napoléon and their descendants.

Art. IV.—In case Louis Napoléon Bonaparte should leave no heir, legitimate or adopted, he will settle by a decree, addressed to the Senate and deposited in the archives, the order of succession to the throne in the family of Bonaparte.

Art. V.—In default of legitimate or adopted heirs of Louis Napoléon Bonaparte and of successors in the collateral line claiming under the aforesaid decree, a decree proposed to the Senate by Ministers in Council with the addition of the acting Presidents of the Senate, the Legislative Body and the Council of State, is submitted to the people for their acceptance ; such decree nominating the Emperor, and regulating the order of male inheritance in his family, to the perpetual exclusion of females and their descendants.

Until the moment when the election of the new Emperor is completed, the affairs of the State will be administered by the Ministry, who will form themselves into a Council of Government, their decisions being taken by a majority of votes.

Art. VI.—The members of the family of Louis Napoléon Bonaparte who may eventually be called to inherit, and their descendants of either sex, form the Imperial family. A decree of the Senate will regulate their

position. They cannot marry without the authority of the Emperor. A marriage entered into without such authority entails the forfeiture of all claim to inherit, both for the person contracting such marriage and for his descendants.

Nevertheless, should no children of such marriage exist, and the marriage be dissolved by the death of the wife, the Prince who has contracted such marriage recovers his right of inheritance.

Louis Napoléon Bonaparte fixes the title and condition of the other members of his family.

The Emperor has full authority over all the members of his family ; he regulates their duties and their obligations by statutes that have the force of law.

Art. VII.—The Constitution of January 15th, 1852, is maintained in all those of its provisions which are not contrary to the present Decree of the Senate ; modifications thereof can only be made in the forms and by the means therein provided.

Art. VIII.—The following motion will be submitted for the acceptance of the people according to the forms determined by the decrees of December 2nd and 4th, 1851 :

“The People desire the restoration of the Imperial dignity in the person of Louis Napoléon Bonaparte, with succession to his heirs direct, legitimate, or adopted, and gives him the right to regulate the order of succession to the throne in the Bonaparte family, as has been provided by the Decree of the Senate of November 7th, 1852.”

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This question of the succession is preoccupying the Prince. It is not difficult to foresee that it implies an Imperial marriage. But who will be the Empress ? I do not believe that the dream of the Grand Duchess will be realized. There are other eyes that take the fancy of him who is now the Emperor. Whose eyes ? He has not confided in me as to this, but I can guess.

\* \* \*

*November 7th.*—The Senate met at noon under the

presidency of Vice-President Ménard, and, in presence of the Commissaries of the Government, deliberated upon each of the Articles of the Decree of the Senate. These Articles were successively adopted, and, a division being taken on the Articles *en bloc*, the Decree of the Senate was adopted by 86 votes to 1.

Immediately after the sitting, all the Senators in full dress and the Cardinals in their scarlet robes, preceded by an escort of cavalry, repaired in a body to the Palace of Saint-Cloud, where they assembled in the Great Gallery.

Some minutes later, the Prince-President entered the hall, surrounded by his Ministers and the Commissaries appointed by the Council of State, and accompanied by the officers of his household. At his entry, he was greeted with shouts of "Vive l'Empereur!"

M. Ménard, placing in his hands the Decree of the Senate just adopted, then addressed the Prince in a speech to which the latter made a suitable reply, and the shouts of "Vive l'Empereur!" broke out with redoubled vigour.

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*Same date.*—I am overwhelmed with emotion. Here then is the dream of Arenaberg become a reality. I cannot express the joy I feel. I, too, cry from the bottom of my heart "Vive l'Empereur!" and salute with rapture the dawn of the Empire.



## CHAPTER XIII

### THE EMPIRE ESTABLISHED

*December 1852*

The second *plébiscite*; overwhelming majorities—Proclamation of the Empire—The Tuileries restored and refurnished—The Baron d'Ambès inspects the improvements—The Emperor's Civil List; Palaces; Properties—The Imperial Household—Who will be Empress?—Mlle de Montijo—Men of the day: Rouher, Morny, Persigny, Billault, Cassagnac, Veuillot.

*November 23rd.*—The result of the *plébiscite* has been declared. Seven million, eight hundred and twenty-four thousand, one hundred and ninety-eight Frenchmen acclaim the Emperor. ]

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*December 3rd.*—I have gathered some details about the proclamation of the Empire. Since the month of October nobody had felt any doubts about it. The triumphal return of Louis Napoléon to Paris after his progress in the South gave evident proof of the unanimous wishes of the Nation. I can still see the inscription "Vox populi, vox Dei" and "Ave Caesar Imperator," and at the entrance to the Tuileries, "To Napoleon, Emperor and saviour of modern civilization, Protector of Arts and Sciences, of Agriculture, Industry and Commerce, the grateful workmen of Paris," and the illuminations in the evening throughout the whole town, on the Boulevards and in the working-quarters, and the indescribable enthusiasm. I can hear again the reading of

the report on the change in the Constitution which had been drawn up by the co-operation of a Marshal of France, four Generals, two Cardinals, two Dukes, and even an astronomer, Leverrier, as if to testify the adherence of Jupiter, Neptune and all the constellations. The reporter, a man of learning, had not forgotten to fortify himself with the opinions of Tacitus and Machiavelli in order to prove that the best judges of the greatness of a Nation were on his side. And I read on the luminous transparencies the results of the *plébiscite*, together with the particular statement that Paris, out of 270,710 voters, gave 208,615 "Ayes," that is to say, an almost unanimous vote. I was at Saint-Cloud when the decision of the country was communicated to the Prince, and I have still present in my memory the words that he uttered in thanking France. By-the-by, I remember in this connection what Mme Cornu once told me of the prediction of a gipsy woman: "He will mount to the summit of power." He is there now, and I associate myself with his joy. His dream is realized. Now may the stars invoked by Leverrier prove propitious to him!

The ceremony of the Proclamation was a magnificent one. A hundred and one salutes were fired by the guns at the Invalides at seven in the morning. At ten, salutes the same in number, were fired simultaneously from the Invalides, from Montmartre, and from the Place du Trône, echoed from all the various forts of Paris. At ten o'clock also, a solemn Proclamation at Saint-Cloud. At noon the Emperor quitted Saint-Cloud. The whole army of Paris lined the avenues; the Imperial escort consisted of four squadrons of lancers, a regiment of dragoons, a brigade of cuirassiers, another of carbineers, and two bodies of trumpeters. The new Marshals, Saint-Arnaud and Magnan, appointed that very day, accompanied the cortège, together with King Jérôme and Marshal Vaillant. The Emperor had on either side his aides-de-camp, Fleury and Edgar Ney. At the moment when the cortège passed beneath the Arc de Triomphe, the sun, which had up till then been somewhat hazy, suddenly burst out with dazzling rays. "The sun of Austerlitz," said some one

beside us. "Yes," I answered, "and this is its anniversary." The Emperor, before entering the Tuileries, reviewed the troops on the Place du Carrousel to a salute of a hundred and one guns. The Coronation will, in reality, be limited to this ceremony. I do not believe it will take place in any other form.<sup>1</sup>

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*December 5th.*—I have had an opportunity of visiting the Tuileries, which I had not seen for a long time. The Palace has been completely restored. An army of architects and decorative artists, under the direction of Visconti, have superintended the work, which has been going on for about three months. Everything has been done with great judgment. In the Salle des Travées, the sun of Louis XIV. in the ceiling has been regilded, and also the medallions of Wisdom, Justice, Knowledge, and Power. The row of busts of the Roman Emperors in bronze and porphyry produce a very imposing effect. In the ante-chamber of the Galérie de la Paix, I admired the cherubs blowing trumpets around "Fame" bearing the symbolic palm. Vauchelet has been most successful in this. In the Galérie de la Paix itself the columns and pilasters of Philibert Delorme shine resplendent in their fresh gilding. The marble statues of L'Hôpital and d'Aguesseau have been removed, and have been replaced by immense candelabra. Over the mantelpiece is a life-like portrait of Napoleon III., by Muller. But the most complete transformation of all has been made in the Salle des Maréchaux. It has now six doors instead of four, and is adorned with fourteen portraits of Marshals of the First Empire and the busts of a score or so of Generals. The ceiling is dazzling, and of great beauty. On the walls are scutcheons bearing the names of all the victories of Napoleon I. These are painted in green, the family colour of the Bonapartes. Great changes have also been made in the White Salon; the furniture has been renewed, some Boule cabinets having been borrowed from

<sup>1</sup> The Emperor preferred to distribute a sum of 250,000 francs to the hospitals and orphanages of France.



Versailles and Trianon. Alterations have also been made in the Salle d'Apollon.

The Throne Room is now of incomparable magnificence. The dais is covered with red velvet powdered with golden bees and edged with laurel-leaves. Above, a large eagle displays his outstretched wings. The throne comes from the lumber-room; it is the one on which Napoleon I. was crowned. I walked slowly through all these apartments to the state bedroom, where are to be seen again, though the old decorations have been much embellished, the paintings of Noret and de Fouquières, and the symbolic statues of the Arts and Sciences, of Glory and Renown. In Louis Philippe's time the room was all smothered in dust, but the feather-brooms have been vigorously at work. The Salon de Mars needed but little repair, but careful cleaning was necessary in the case of the Galérie de Diane, the erstwhile Salon des Ambassadeurs of Louis XIV., the decoration of which had been superintended by Colbert himself. Now all is ready, and the new Emperor can install himself in his Palace, there to commune, as he has done so often, with the spirit of him who preceded him, and whose influence will dictate his future policy.

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*December 10th.*—The Emperor has organized his household. The Grand Marshal of the Palace is Vaillant, a man whose qualities answer admirably to his name. He was present at the retreat from Moscow, at the battle of Paris, where he was wounded, at Ligny, and at Waterloo. Later he fought in Algeria, where his exploits are still remembered. He is not only a great soldier, but an exceptionally gifted savant, a member of the Academy of Sciences and the Bureau of Longitudes. He is also an accomplished mathematician. The qualities of his heart are as good as those of his head. He spends the 250,000 francs of his salary in charity and in scientific work. The Lord Chamberlain is the Duc de Bassano, son of Maret; it is he who examines requests for audience and submits them to the Emperor, who indicates those persons whom he is

willing to receive. There are other dignitaries associated with the Lord Chamberlain. These are for the most part persons related to the old Imperial nobility, the Macdonalds, d'Ornanos, Labédoyères, Monceys, and with them some members of the Legitimist aristocracy who have rallied to the Empire, the Marquis de Chaumont, de Gricourt, d'Harincourt, the Comtes d'Aiguevives and de Riencourt, the Vicomtes Walsh and de la Verrière.

The Emperor's military household is under the command of General Roguet ; it consists of a large number of officers and, in particular, of aides-de-camp—Niel, Canrobert, Le Bœuf, the Comte de Guyon, the Comte Pajol, Mollard, Lannes, de Montebello, General Favé, Generals Douay and Frossard, de Failly and Bourbaki, Espinasse and Béville, the last two having co-operated in the *Coup d'État*. I will mention finally, among the persons most deserving of notice by whom the Emperor is surrounded, that untiring companion of his fortunes, Doctor Conneau, who has shown himself so faithful on every occasion, at Strassburg, at Boulogne, and at Ham, and who is now at the head of the medical staff attached to the Court.

Delagrance, who must always be finding fault, exclaimed to me the other day :

“ This household of the Emperor's is a den of thieves, a robbers' cave.”

But Delagrance is mad—mad. He is a man who is always throwing mud. For my part, I find the Emperor surrounded by the élite of science, talent and courage. Napoleon has chosen his dignitaries, conformably to the will of the Nation, by recognizing merit before anything else.

\* \* \*

*December 24th.*—A Decree of the Senate, adopted yesterday, fixes the Emperor's Civil List and the incomes of the Imperial family.

The Emperor's Civil List is fixed at the annual sum of 25,000,000 francs, the same income as was granted to Napoleon I. by decree of the Senate on the 28th of Floréal of the year III.



The dowry of the Empress will be fixed so soon as the Emperor is married.

An annual income of 1,500,000 francs is assigned to the Princes and Princesses of the Imperial family. Its distribution will be made by Imperial decree.

The real estate belonging to the Crown includes the Imperial palaces, together with the manufactories and forests pertaining to them, viz. :

The Tuileries and the Palais-Royal ; Versailles, Marly, Saint-Germain, Saint-Cloud, Meudon, Fontainebleau, Compiègne, Rambouillet, Pau, and Strasbourg, together with the farms, grounds, meadows, and woods appurtenant ;

The manufactories of Sèvres, the Gobelins, and Beauvais ;

The woods of Vincennes, and the forests of Dourdan, Sénart, and La Laigne.

The private property possessed by the Emperor at the time of his accession to the throne will be united to the domains of the State. These are the estates of Lamoignon, Villeneuve-l'Étang, and La Grille.

The movable property comprises, as under the Empire and the Monarchy, the crown diamonds, the Museums, Libraries, and other buildings devoted to the arts.

A question here arises. The Empire is established, but the Decree of the Senate which has proclaimed it contemplates an Imperial dynasty, that is to say, the marriage of the Emperor. Now, who will be the Empress ?

One name is upon everybody's lips.

It has been remarked that, wherever the Prince-President since his election, and the Emperor since his accession to the throne, has directed his steps, at all the fêtes given at Saint-Cloud, at Fontainebleau, at Compiègne, Mme de Montijo and her daughter appear as if by magic, captivating every one's attention.

Their names figure invariably on the invitation lists. They are present at all the reviews, in the Place du Carrousel, at the Champ de Mars, at Satory ; they are to be seen at all the receptions given by the Head of the State.



I shall not here relate the history of Mme de Montijo and her daughters, the Comtesse de Téba and the Duchesse d'Albe. Their genealogy has been published with their portraits by all the journals, and it would be tedious to reproduce it. I will merely say that the Comtesse Eugénie is majestically beautiful. I can hardly express the admiration with which she inspires me. Titian would have gone on his knees before her. The fairness of her complexion is incomparable. The delicate carmine of her cheeks, the limpid blue of her eyes possess an unspeakable charm. There is an exquisite sweetness in her smile. Her movements have a graceful ease which does not detract from her dignity.

Castellane who, like Pélissier, is somewhat too outspoken, said to the Emperor :

"Mlle de Montijo is divinely beautiful. What surprises me is that, run after as she is, she has not yet married."

The Emperor smiled as is his habit when he does not wish his secrets to leak out, and made no reply. However it is not difficult to guess his thoughts. Louis Napoléon, as no one knows better than myself, has always been susceptible to feminine beauty. Mlle de Montijo holds him captive. To me this is evident, but though I remain his confidant, he has never spoken of her to me. I know from Fleury, however, that she has often been the subject of their conversation. One day the Emperor even said to him :

"Well, yes, I love her."

"You must marry her," was Fleury's advice.

Pélissier gave the same counsel, but with the military brusqueness that does not mince words.

Pélissier and Fleury know—as I do myself—that there is an obstacle, Miss Howard. Louis Napoléon cannot—dare not—yet confess his intentions to the English girl.

On the other hand, he knows the Spanish pride of Mlle de Montijo. He would like first to know what answer she would make to his proposals. The Marquise de Contades, daughter of the wife of the Maréchal de Castellane, has undertaken to question the Comtesse discreetly.

Fould has disclosed to me that the Emperor is to meet her, as though by accident, in one of the paths at the Château of Compiègne, and offer her the Imperial crown.

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I note a figure which is not yet prominent, but which is likely to become so—M. Rouher; he is not yet a person of mark, but will be one some day. His face is intelligent, but inscrutable. There is a fire in his eyes, only it is veiled beneath the folds of his eyebrows. Yet his large, strong hands denote energy, his aquiline nose, shrewdness. His whole outward appearance is characteristic of the Auvergnat. His speech also betrays him by its huskiness, and by his provincial pronunciation of the g's like z's. But if his language is not attractive, if his phrases lack loftiness, if there is nothing dominating in his whole appearance, you nevertheless feel that beneath this apparently rude exterior lies a power that will one day assert itself. I fully believe that my prediction will come true. M. Rouher knows how to push himself. At Riom, where he was born forty-eight years ago, the methodical regularity of his life was much respected. He did not bring back into the country the habits of idleness so prevalent in Paris, where he studied law. He is of a studious disposition. Having become an advocate, he pleaded at the bar and in the police-courts to the satisfaction of his clients. He took advantage of the Revolution of 1848 to return to Paris as deputy, and so combined politics with his legal practice. In the courts he soon gained a reputation for cleverness. Puns were made about him: his name was written *Roué* instead of *Rouher*. He was looked upon as a man who had taken a definite path because he knew beforehand that it was the best one. People were also convinced that he was no fanatical stickler for principles. He is related to have made this *mot*: "I never neglect any opportunity of learning. I read every day some pages of a book that I keep by my pillow. It is by a Chinese author of great repute, who is called 'Je m'en fous'" (I don't care a damn). It was recognized that if he ever entered the



Government—and he has hopes of doing so—he would continue to profess the doctrines of his Chinaman, and would conduct his politics like an advocate, sorting his papers one by one, placing his client's cause before everything else, and aiming only at the success of his pleading.

I believe the Prince has his eye upon him. He is one of those men whom Louis Napoléon studies and observes, and who know how to adapt themselves to requirements. The Empire needs such capable supporters, men with a grasp strong enough to make the wheel of fortune turn round. It seems to me that M. Rouher will not give the lie to this forecast of him.

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The Prince has among his friends two men who exercise a great influence over him, but who are singularly different in views and procedure—Morny and Persigny. Both are certainly devoted to him, but each in his own fashion. Morny, who has a finger in every pie—prodigal of money—clear-sighted by instinct, but spoiling this quickness of perception by his eagerness for adventure; Persigny, the brutal Cerberus, a slave to orders, like the soldier who goes where he is bidden without making reply, and permitting no obstruction from others where his course of action has been laid down—Persigny, faithful as a Newfoundland dog (I made the mistake of suspecting him, but I did not know him well then). Morny a great nobleman; Persigny an obedient subordinate. Morny, Louis Napoléon's "pet vice," as Thiers has called him; Persigny the pitiless executant of his master's will, but asking no reward for his services, a tool that expects nothing from the hand that employs it. Morny the free-liver, who pirouettes jauntily on his heels, and is always ready to "be on the side of the broom"; Persigny the man content with little, and who sees in the broom only the instrument by which to carry out what he has been ordered to perform. These two influences have acted turn by turn upon the Prince in the events of 1852, as in 1851; I believe they have not yet



played out their parts, but the Prince will not let himself be driven by them a step further than he chooses.

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In the number of devoted adherents, I place Granier de Cassagnac and Véron; both do service to the Prince through the press. Cassagnac, as formidable in the legislative precincts as in journalism, "employs"—as has been truly said—"his pen as a rapier, and slashes at his opponent like an indefatigable fighter." Véron, cunning and malicious, surrounds himself in the *Constitutionnel* with his phalanx of bold and incisive sub-editors, and can, if necessary, carry the question in dispute into the tribune and there win applause.

## CHAPTER XIV

### CELEBRITIES

Courbet and the new school of painting—Arese and his news—Arese at the Tuileries; a political mission—De Lesseps—Curious anecdote of Topino-Lebrun, painter and revolutionist—Saint-Marc Girardin—Sainte-Beuve—Michelet—Edgar Quinet—Montalembert.

*Courbet.*—One day Delagrangé, walking with me to the Champs Élysées, nudged me with his elbow as we passed a man with a fiery red beard, and whispered: "That's Courbet."

*Courbet?* The name conveyed nothing to my mind. "A revolutionist, a storm-compeller, in painting, who is setting everybody by the ears. You haven't heard of him? . . . No? But you will, and that pretty soon. He is brutal, coarse-grained, heavy-handed; but he is not without talent."

"Yes," I replied, "I know we live in a singular age. The revolution of 1848 was a battle not only in political matters; the confusion and the folly extended to literature and the arts as well. *Everything* smacks of Republicanism. Neither masters, principles, nor pupils any longer exist. The individual declares himself superior to all rules and all considerations."

"But when this spirit of independence produces a Victor Hugo in poetry, a Paul Huet and a Corot in landscape-painting, a Millet in —"

"In pictorial democracy," I interrupted. "That is what alarms me. I don't know your Courbet, but I know my Millet. I have still present in my mind his '*Vanneur*' which, if I recollect right, dumbfounded the

populace in 1848. There you saw all the great traditions in regard to design, choice, and loftiness of subject, abandoned. Painters nowadays choose for their subjects peasants, workmen, and people of that class, and you must confess that, as regards beauty of outline, one might do better."<sup>1</sup>

"That is a matter of opinion," replied my everlasting contradictor. "If the spectacle of rustic and industrial life thrills Millet and Courbet, why shouldn't they try to translate their emotions into art?"

"Ah! that is just what astonishes me, and which is a sign of the times. Formerly, painters had none but lofty emotions. Only rich colours or graceful lines appealed to them. This fantastic evolution which was to lead the people up to the heights has really degraded their minds and left in their hearts only the love of the ugly and the commonplace. Presently we shall see sculptors, instead of delighting our eyes with the beauties of the human body—such as the Greeks modelled in such perfection—we shall see them reproducing the movements of a sweating navvy digging the ground or a labourer mixing mortar—striking subjects, truly, for the adornment of a drawing-room! But I am not alarmed; when the rich grow tired of this style of art, and will no longer buy it, while the poor content themselves with paying for it merely by their admiration, the artists will soon give up all this rubbish and return to those forms of art the object of which is to please the eye by portraying the beautiful and the graceful."

"We shall see! we shall see!" growled Delagrangé. "That doesn't prevent my Courbet, as you call him, being very far from a fool or an ignoramus. I remember his earlier pictures very well; they were biblical, allegorical, as classical as you please. He is a cunning fellow at bottom. He has studied the old masters, so that, if he now rejects them, it cannot be said that he does so through

<sup>1</sup> It is curious to see that the Baron d'Ambès, who was so strong a supporter of the "new" literature (he took the side of Balzac, it will be remembered, against Noailles) should be so conservative in his ideas about painting. But we know that he always made a point of contradicting Delagrangé.



stupidity. And now he is on the look out for something different—something fresh and striking. He is a new Delacroix, introducing innovations, and not caring a snap of the fingers about being laughed at. He is a young fellow. . . .”

“Happily, my dear friend, we can put a spoke in their wheel. The selection committees won’t encourage this style of thing. And they are right, for otherwise they would be swamped with it. They refuse, with all their might, the admission to the salons of these daubers who are the *sans-culottes* of art.”

“Public opinion will denounce the committees. Yes, d’Ambès, they will be swamped, but it will be by the ever-increasing army of the new-comers. Already their defence is being taken up by critics of great authority. Look at Charles Blanc, Clément de Ris, Thoré. . . .”

“What of that? There have always been fools to defend fools.”

As our argument was taking a somewhat bitter turn, we parted. At bottom, I talk rather for the sake of making Delagrange angry. I am not so obstinately conservative as all that. But I dislike extravagances. I remember that the Prince-President himself said to me one day that he would like to see all these innovators grouped together in an Exhibition of their own, and that this would be the simplest method of putting an end to these disputes about art. The public would then decide.<sup>1</sup>

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1852. . . .—Dined with Arese. I have not had that pleasure for a long time, though I have not lost sight of him. I wanted to know what he thought of the *Coup d’État*, and what he was meditating. He is one of those men who are always playing an important part in the dim background of politics.

Since the end of 1849, after the death of his wife, he seemed to have withdrawn from politics, for his grief at

<sup>1</sup> This idea was put into execution ten years later when Napoleon III. organized officially the famous *Salon des Refusés*.

her loss was great. But, having been in London in 1851, he crossed over to Paris, where he saw the Prince-President and learned what were his projects. Shall I confess it? I was a little jealous that my great friend should have confided more of his plans at that time to this Italian than to myself. Well! well! . . . It is true that my Milanese knew how to win people over. Naturally, Arese had too much interest in the President's exchanging his hat for a crown not to give him the strongest encouragement—first by putting his hand on the collar of the Assembly, and then by tripping it up by the heels.

Thus the *Coup d'État* was an event entirely expected by the agent of Victor Emmanuel. He congratulated its author, and henceforth sought how to turn the matter to the advantage of the Transalpinists.

"On the 16th of December," said François Arese to me, "I received an extremely cordial letter from Louis Napoléon assuring me that his success would in no way diminish his friendship for me, and inviting me to come and see him just as I had done in the past. You may guess if I did not wish to take advantage of this windfall. Unfortunately, soon after my wife's death, my aged father was seized by his last illness. I obtained, not without difficulty, from Marshal Radetzki a safe-conduct to travel to Milan. There I found my father *in extremis*, and buried him on the 22nd of January."

This fresh bereavement prevented Arese from undertaking the mission with which Massimo d'Azeglio, President of the Sardinian Council, wished to entrust him, and which consisted in going to congratulate Louis Napoléon, on behalf of the Cabinet of Turin, on his success of December 2nd, and asking him at the same time to act as arbitrator with reference to the difficulties which had arisen between the Pope and Victor Emmanuel. This task was eventually undertaken by the Count of Colligno. On this head it is related that M. d'Azeglio told the Prince-President that: "To intervene in this dispute he would not have to plunge into the intricacies of *canon* law, but would only have to make *cannon* law speak, as his uncle had done before him!"



It was only in February of this year that Arese, having returned to Genoa, started for Turin, and received from the King of Sardinia the necessary instructions. He arrived in Paris in March, and was lodged at the Tuileries, and I saw him then on two or three occasions, at meals to which the Prince invited me to meet him. At these times, however, the wily Sardinian spoke with great reserve. He knew quite well that I did not entirely approve of his pro-Italian policy. What secret interviews did he have with Louis Napoléon? That is known only to God, Victor Emmanuel, Conneau, and Cavour. His intimacy with the Prince increased. Arese departed, and came back again at the time of the fête of the Eagles in May, and began to exert pressure on the Prince's mind. The nail was bound to be driven in, for surely he struck it often enough!

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*De Lesseps.*—I have just heard the name of a man who, I believe, has a great future before him—Ferdinand de Lesseps. I note the name carefully, as one does in the case of one of whom one is justified in saying we shall hear again. This man is haunted by an idea which has been entertained by more than one dreamer before him—he wants to cut through the Isthmus of Suez. People smile and point the finger at him and say: “Poor visionary!” He lets them scoff and criticize. In my opinion, he is a man to be taken seriously. I have been told the story of his life, which is not without interest. His ancestors go back far into history. In the sixteenth century a Bernard de Lesseps was Captain of the Watch. When on guard at the Louvre he opened the gate to Henri de Navarre, who, thanks to his complaisance, made his escape. The King of Béarn had a good memory; he did not forget the Captain, and the fortunes of the family were made.

Ferdinand de Lesseps is now forty-seven. Like his father and his uncle, he was destined for the diplomatic service, after studying with brilliant success at the Lycée Henri IV. He became attaché at Lisbon, then at Tunis,



and then Vice-Consul at Cairo, Consul-General in Egypt, Holland, and Spain, and French Ambassador at Madrid. He possesses great energy of character. This he proved when the plague was raging at Alexandria in 1835. The scourge was causing wholesale emigration. Ferdinand did not follow the example of the panic-stricken fugitives. Sticking to his post, in the midst of the epidemic, he transformed the Consulate into a hospital, and restored confidence both to the French residents and the native population. This conduct won him the Cross of the Legion of Honour.

Thiers wrote to him, "You are indeed a man!" He made himself beloved by the Arabs as much for his courage as for his determination. They admired in him the intrepid traveller who crossed the deserts on camel-back, the unrivalled sportsman who brought down eagles in full flight, the bold adventurer who was ready to risk his life on every hazard. At Barcelona, where he held the office of Consul-General, in 1842, he exhibited truly heroic behaviour during the bombardment of the town by Espartero. He hoisted the French flag and sheltered under its folds whosoever sought a place of refuge. All Europe admired this intrepid conduct. Barcelona struck a medal in his honour, and placed his bust in the Town Hall. But his very popularity rendered him an object of suspicion to the French Government. One only of the Ministers, Lamartine, did him justice, and placed him at the head of the French Legation in the Spanish Capital. Subsequently he was entrusted with the care of watching over French interests at Rome. Being subsequently recalled, he went and occupied himself with agricultural matters in Berry. However, he is not indifferent to affairs in the East, but is watching them attentively. I am convinced that this de Lesseps will play a conspicuous part some day.

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*Undated.*—Delagrangé told me a gruesome story about a friend of Mme de Baur, which appeared in a book of Souvenirs written by her.



GUIZOT.



LAMARTINE.

From an engraving by Pollet.





The painter Topino Lebrun of Marseilles, a pupil of David, became so fierce a Revolutionist he used to sit on the tribunal presided over by Fouquier Tinville. He thus brought about the death of numerous victims. Some of the accused, however, he was instrumental in getting acquitted, being actuated by spasmodic feelings of pity—a certain proof that he was occasionally seized also with remorse.

One morning Lemot the sculptor (the author of the statues of Jean Bart at Dunkirk, of Louis XIV. in the Place Bellecour at Lyons, and of Henri IV. on the Pont-Neuf in Paris) entered the studio of Topino Lebrun, and, suddenly perceiving an easel on which was a picture concealed by a very thick veil, he made for it, saying :

“What is this mystery ? . . . Is it the *masterpiece* ?”

He was about to lift the veil, when Topino seized him roughly by the arm, and said in a sharp tone :

“Stop ! Nobody must see that.”

Lemot looked at his friend, perceived his emotion, and, taking him affectionately by the hand, tried to draw from him the secret which was oppressing him. Topino resisted for some time, but finally, with a trembling hand, removed the veil, saying :

“You want to know ? . . . Very well, there it is !”

Upon the canvas was represented a heap of bleeding human heads, the expression of terror and anguish in their eyes depicted with the utmost skill. The spectacle was a terrible one—a perfect nightmare of horror. Topino explained :

“I have been urged on by Republican ideas to acts which appeared to me necessary, but which have at times cost me many a pang. I have brought heads to the scaffold. And these heads now pursue me, haunt my waking moments, disturb my dreams, lie in wait for me in the streets. I am possessed by these horrors. So I have painted this to try to rid myself of the hatred, scorn, and supplication with which these heads fix their glance upon me ; and I think I have found a little relief ! . . .”

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*Saint-Marc Girardin.*—An opponent, but a moderate one, and not a dangerous man. There was a time when we might have had to reckon *with* him, if we could not reckon *on* him. That was when, before the Revolution of July, he wrote sundry articles in the *Débats* that caused no little stir. To-day his pen is scarcely formidable. I do not deny him the merit of delicacy of touch combined with ingenuity of view. But he is a mere professor, and obtains no hearing outside the Sorbonne. He has exercised his flights of fancy only against the Romanticists; and the arrows—not poisoned ones, I allow—with which he has riddled them have done them no mischief. I am told that he has a great influence with young men, because in his lectures he touches on political as well as literary questions. I have not read him much, but I know that he enjoys a reputation in the academic world and in the circles where literature is held in honour. He sits at the Academy in the chair formerly occupied by the worthy Campenon, who was, as everybody knows, a target for jokes and epigrams. Saint-Marc Girardin himself, I am assured, is also a very worthy man, of whom it may be said that he confines himself so closely to the rut of common sense that he seldom ventures to indulge in flights of fancy. However, he has occasionally taken such a flight, and has spoken on certain occasions about the human heart as a man who has really listened to its throbbings.

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*Sainte-Beuve.*—I hear still the clamour provoked by the last articles of Sainte-Beuve and by the sympathy which he has evinced for Prince Napoléon and the Princesse Mathilde. His “*Causeries du Lundi*,” begun two years ago in the *Constitutionnel*, have been eagerly read. There is no writer, so far as I know, more in the public eye than he. He stands indisputably quite in the front rank, and it is evidently for that reason that he has enemies. His prudent mind assiduously seeks communion with the great minds of both the past and the present. He is familiar with all periods of history, and his



researches into antiquity, as well as his acquaintance with modern and contemporary writers, have put him in possession of a vast treasure of those side-issues of history which have escaped the most sagacious observers. He has journeyed through books and documents, seizing upon facts and personages in detail, and then reconstituting the events and the actors with such a penetration of glance that not only do you accept him as an undisputed authority, but feel as though he must have actually witnessed the scenes which he describes.

In character he was essentially the child of his parents. From his father, whom he never knew, having lost him before his birth, he has inherited a keen interest in letters ; to his mother, who was of English extraction, he owes his reflective qualities. From his early years, thanks to the education given him by his mother, he was nourished on English literature, chiefly that of the poets—the “Lake” poets especially—in whose works he learned to spell. Like many children born of a union formed late in life—his father was more than fifty at the time of his marriage, his mother more than forty—he had, from his entrance upon life, something of that mature seriousness which gives concentration of thought. When still quite young he was of a melancholy and timid disposition, and these traits of character were so much encouraged by his mother’s training that at the age of twelve his one dream was to become a priest or a recluse, this pious zeal being further stimulated by singing in the church choir. This craze was only a temporary one, but it lasted long enough, for at eighteen he was still absorbed in the study of theology. One day, as he was rummaging in the libraries, he came across Lamarck, de Tracy, Daunou and other works of “sensationalist” philosophy, with the result that theology lost a neophyte. Empiricism then got the upper hand, and soon he definitely adopted this doctrine.

However, he had to live, and his resources were very moderate. With the hope of improving them he became a medical student. Those who knew him about the year 1826, when he was twenty-two, recall a fair-haired



youth of a dreamy look, but with a peculiar lustre in his eyes, which indicated his preoccupation with the future. In the Quartier Latin his comrades regarded him as a savage taking refuge in his isolation. The real reason of his holding aloof was that he could not spend money like the rest. The grisettes, who are only affable to young men in proportion as these latter can pay for their dress and their caprices, avoided him, and this neglect reflected itself in the bitter and scornful expression of his lips.

Sainte-Beuve was, in my opinion, of an essentially impulsive nature. This explains his successive friendships, first with the family of Saint-Simon, then with Armand Carrel, from whom he separated abruptly in order to espouse the cause of the Legitimists, and later still of the Romanticists. These he also presently deserted on account of Hugo, and more particularly of Hugo's wife, a romantic story to which every one possesses the key. When his escapade at Lausanne allowed him to return to Paris, he found another centre of attraction in the salons of Mme d'Arbouville. Molé effected his reconciliation with the Classicists and with the Monarchical Party. These opened for him the doors of the Academy, where, by the irony of circumstances, it was Hugo who admitted him. Mme d'Arbouville had been dead two years, and the frequenters of her salon were dispersed. The bonds which attached Sainte-Beuve to the Monarchy were broken, and the revival of his democratic memories drew him in the direction of the Second Empire like many others whose convictions of 1830 had become modified. Sainte-Beuve recognizes to-day that the return to the Napoleons was the only means of restoring the principles of national safety. It is a conversion of which I can do nothing but approve, though its chief authors are Prince Napoleon and Princesse Mathilde. Personally, I am very glad of it.

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*Michelet.*—I was at the Café de la Régence with four of my friends: Philibert Audebrand, a journalist; Évariste

Boulay-Paty, a poet ; Chéruel, an historian ; and Gozlan, a novelist. We were speaking of Michelet, the approaching publication of whose book on Jeanne d'Arc had just been announced. Each of those who sat round the table had his word to say. The poet, the historian, the novelist and the journalist all claimed him in turn as one of their own fraternity. And each of them was right. Poetry, romance, history, polemics in the Press—Michelet shines, in fact, in all these different branches of literature. His history is often essentially poetic, often romantic in a unique degree, while at other times it is merely the work of a polemist. What dominates all his work is his combative temperament. He became very early acquainted with struggle—the struggle for a livelihood in the first place ; and this personal experience has made him conceive of society in general as being the stern tyrant that he has found it to be from his infancy.

Very precocious, of extremely refined sensibilities, which were rendered all the more keen by an education bestowed by his mother, and by material sufferings (for he knew hunger and cold, nights of tears and anguish, annoyance from his companions, harsh words from a father, who was a kind man at heart, but embittered by toil), Jules Michelet's character was formed by contact with type-setters at the small printing establishment where he was brought up, and where he heard nothing but socialist and demagogical theories, the echoes of the Revolution which still lingered in the memories of the men of that time. Having become a professor, thanks to the persistent toil with which he conducted his own education, he obtained at the age of twenty-four a post as teacher in a College, and five years later began upon the series of historical works which have made him famous.

Appointed as lecturer at the École Normale Supérieure, he there gave proof, not only of learning, but of eloquence. His books, as much as his lectures, gained him renown. The friend of Guizot and Villemain (for the former of whom he acted as deputy at the Sorbonne), and backed up by their influence which, in their capacity



as Ministers, was considerable, he made a brilliant entry at the Collège de France, where his lectures on history were thronged by eager audiences. The public manifested an equal enthusiasm on reading the *Histoire de France*, of which it was justly said that it brought the past actually to life again. Michelet is, in truth, a magician. By the force of his imagination, as much as by his knowledge, he calls up the past from oblivion and clothes it in a new dress ; gets at the soul of it, and makes it throb with life under the influence of his tongue and pen. I have said that he is a fighter, and this tendency is bound to reappear in his teaching.

He believed that his professor's chair might be, and ought to be, converted into a pulpit. He persuaded himself that it was his mission to organize a crusade against the clergy and the Jesuits. The wind was already blowing in that direction at the Collège de France. Edgar Quinet and Mickiewicz were the apostles of the movement, and Michelet joined forces with them. Naturally, he stirred up anger in the camp of those whom he attacked. A storm burst over his head, which resulted in the suspension of his lectures and the cancelling of his appointment which has just taken place.

I do not know what the future—which no man can control—has in store for Michelet, but I doubt if he will be a political success. Besides, politics may not have any attraction for him. He will very probably go back entirely to his studies, with or without the determination to rest satisfied with them. I am told that—pending the resumption of his work on the *Histoire de France*—he is working at a *History of the Revolution* ; but he is so full of enthusiasm for the Revolution as necessarily to be hostile to Napoleon I., and therefore, by a logical corollary, hostile to a Napoleon III. whom he does not understand.

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*Edgar Quinet.*—He has lived at Brussels since December 2nd, when he was sent into exile. A journey which I lately took to Belgium gave me the opportunity



of seeing him. His vicissitudes of fortune have not disturbed the serenity of his countenance. His brow maintains the beauty which is the reflection of his thoughts. To look at him you would not guess at the tempests which are surging within his brain. He is a man of fiery disposition, from whom you would not expect calmness, yet his impetuosity, if I may so say, is dominated by reflection. When he publishes the philosophy of his ideas—at which I am told he is working—we shall have the explanation of his temperament. This latter may be compared to some very fertile French soil in which German seed has been made to sprout. He has formed himself, in fact, on the school of Herder, from whom he has drawn his theories on the evolution of humanity, the development of religions, and the mission of peoples and nationalities. Under the impulse of these theories he has become an irreconcilable opponent of Ultramontanism, a warm admirer of the champions of Reform—as Louis Blanc calls the precursors of the movement—and of all those who have fought with Rome on behalf of Protestantism. A very militant Belgian, Charles Potvin, a poet and journalist, has inspired him with an enthusiastic admiration for one of the leaders of the Dutch “Gueux” in the sixteenth century, namely, Marnix de Sainte-Aldegonde, author of a famous anti-papal polemic, *La Ruche* (The Hive), of which Quinet is preparing a translation. Quinet, like Michelet (who was one of his colleagues at the Collège de France), had created round him at Paris, since 1842, a circle of fervent admirers. His flamboyant style kindled tumultuous manifestations of approval. He is less popular, however, than the author of the *Histoire de France*. This is due to the character of his works, which are not addressed to the masses, being distinguished by an erudition which is quite over the heads of the crowd. It is only people of good education who read the *Revue des Deux Mondes*. His books are always of a serious caste; his poems, like “Ahasuerus,” “Napoléon,” and “Prometheus,” have, indeed, something of the epic character, but soar aloft into the inaccessible heights of

metaphysic and mysticism. It is only people of a very reflective turn of mind who can enter into his lucubrations on Germany and the political system of Prussia previous to 1848, or of Italy and her revolutions. Louis Napoléon was one of his most assiduous readers. The Prince has, on several occasions, confided to me that he shared, if not entirely, at any rate in principle, the views of Edgar Quinet on Nationalities, and added: "What I should perhaps be inclined to quarrel with him for, is his predilection in favour of the hegemony of Prussia. He labours as hard for the advantage of Prussia as their Steins, their Scharnhorsts, and their Gneissenaus worked for those reforms which were an object of mistrust to the first Napoleon, and which contributed to foment those hopes and ambitions which were avenged at Jena." The Prince, however, has not hesitated to protect this new France, of which he holds the reins, from this polemic eloquence—an eloquence all the more dangerous in that it veils its vagueness beneath the sentimentalism of phrases, highly coloured indeed, yet misleading, in spite of their appearance of conveying the truth. Quinet affords us an example of a man of great intelligence, whose studies have enriched his mind, but who wanders off into theories badly worked out. He is evidently an artist, but, on that very account, incapable of making any practical contribution to the solution of social problems. Quinet was the Representative of the Ain in the Constituent Assembly. Ah! how many like him were returned at that election in 1848—preachers of a utopian democracy, perched on the Mount to proclaim the Beatitudes, and totally incompetent to establish any durable form of government!

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*Montalembert.*—He is forty-two years of age. A powerful face, whose superiority you recognize at the first glance. I am no partisan of M. de Montalembert, but I appreciate his character. He is of those of whom one would say that they keep their eyes open. He does not shrink from fighting, nor from the consequences which



it may involve. In 1830, when he was no more than twenty years of age, he threw himself resolutely with Lamennais into the fray. Attached by his birth and bringing-up to militant Catholicism, he came at that date to believe, as he believes still, in the possibility of a compromise being arrived at between Rome and liberty. This dream having been shattered by Gregory XVI., Montalembert incurred the menace of the Papal thunder. Being an obedient son of the Church, he submitted to reproof, but cherished, at the bottom of his heart, the hope of seeing his ideas realized some day. His attitude had brought him into public notice, and he had no difficulty in gaining a seat in the Chamber, where he might often be seen in the rostrum, contending with vigorous eloquence on behalf of Ultramontanism, now against the Gallicans, now against the Sorbonne. He also championed, whenever opportunity offered, the cause of the oppressed Catholics in Protestant countries. For all such causes he strove with an ever-fresh ardour. The Revolution of February seemed favourable to his hopes of a Liberal Catholicism. His aim was to place himself at the head of a party which, though thoroughly loyal to the Constitution, should make a firm stand for liberty, and thus counteract the abuses arising from a Parliament practically omnipotent. Louis Napoléon has in Montalembert an opponent whose attacks are not to be despised.



## CHAPTER XV

### REFLECTIONS

Balance-sheet of the year 1852; gains and losses—Unjust criticisms—The National Guard—The Press—*Vox populi, vox Dei*—The Emperor a student of mankind—"The *Coup d'État* a necessary act of vigour, expected by the country and approved by its votes."

*December 31st, 1852.*—I am following a bit of advice given me by my father, who would often tell me: "Years are like men. They have a conscience. And it is good to examine it. A year ends; ask it what it has done, what it has produced, what aims it started with, how far it has realized those aims. No historical method is so valuable." Accordingly, I now sum up the work accomplished in 1852.

Politically, the results are considerable. An entirely new régime has been inaugurated, and its successive stages have been those which I had foreseen. The *Coup d'État*, as it pleases people still to call it, has justified itself. Louis Napoléon had mapped out for himself, on December 2nd, a programme, and he has fulfilled it exactly. He had to respond to the confidence reposed in him by the country, which invested him with a discretionary power for the establishment of order and the suppression of subversive ideas. In creating a Minister of Police and in selecting M. de Maupas to exercise the delicate task of keeping a watch on public opinion, his intentions were above all pacificatory. I am well aware that opponents who reason only from their own interested point of view, blame this appointment as being merely a measure of oppression. But they would have sung quite a different

tune if the Prince-President had given the rein to lawless passions of every kind. I am of those who believe that, to be really happy, France must be guided by a hand of iron. It is always the untamed and fractious steed that requires a curb of steel. To allow France too much liberty is to urge her on to licence. She only walks in the right path when she is kept there by force. The Prince perfectly well understood that the approval extended to his policy would not completely paralyse resistance. With his accustomed quickness of sight he grasped what needed to be done, and did it. The Minister of Police, in his view, was embarking upon an absolutely necessary task. Nothing was more needed, at that moment, than the eye of a master. M. de Maupas became, as it were, an argus-eyed functionary whose duty it was to see all that went on and to report to the authorities. We have been told of meetings which were quite innocent, of conspiracies that existed only in appearance. I hold that it would have been dangerous to have trusted simply to such assertions.

Besides, the Prince has himself explained to me how imprudent it would have been for him not to be on his guard against the contagion spread by inflammatory speeches and against the plots hatched at these meetings, whether public or private. He has made it impossible for the ringleaders and fomenters of disturbances to do mischief. In sending them to the Fortress of Ivry and to Lambessa, he has simply been taking precautions. Prevention is better than severity : to pull up tares from a good field is wisdom. Doubtless, Delagrangé will contradict this ; but Delagrangé is a maniac.

The reconstitution of the National Guard has been found fault with—another unjust criticism. What was the National Guard under Louis Philippe and under the Republic of 1848, up to December 2nd, 1852 ? A hot-bed of ill-will against the Government. Because the National Guards carried rifles, many people persuaded themselves that these weapons had been placed in their hands in order to aid revolt. Though their duty was to secure the tranquillity of the public, they disturbed it by

appearing with arms in the streets. It was necessary to put a stop to all this, to discipline them into a picked force which should act as the guardian of public order. Any one who possesses common sense will be of this opinion. For myself, I consider this reorganization of the National Guard was a brilliant conception, and I have congratulated the Prince on having thought of it.

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I likewise approve of his action in not gagging the Press—as he has been charged with doing—but in simply imposing on the scribblers and pamphleteers that measure of silence which they ought of their own accord to have observed. The Press has become extremely daring. It arrogates to itself the right to employ language which would not be permitted to any one individually. The assertion that newspapers enlighten opinion is a specious one. I have no objection to their enlightening the minds of the public, but to claim the power to transform this light at their will into an incendiary torch—that seems to me exceedingly paradoxical. Because a gentleman who prides himself on a knowledge of letters holds a pen in his hand, he ventures on his own authority to undermine law and government, merely in order to display his knowledge and claiming in advance impunity for his action. A Villemessant, whose chief aim is the sale of his newspaper, abuses the Government in its columns by availing himself of that tendency so characteristic of Frenchmen to ridicule and demolish every one and everything ; a Charles Hugo, because he bears a celebrated name, attacks in the *Évènement* our institutions and the men who watch over them, and kicks up a racket with the object of increasing the number of subscribers to the rag in which he lets off his spleen ; a Mérimée, because no one denies his cleverness, erects the *Revue des Deux Mondes* into a rostrum, in the hope that his words will reach the ears of the masses,—all of them having but one object in view, to create a disturbance by which they may personally profit. And, to listen to them, one would think one ought to applaud their game,



and even give it support. I can only say, for my own part, that they have been justly brought to book. Justice is made for everybody. Any poor devil who was to shout abuse against the President and his Ministers in the streets would soon have his eloquence checked by being marched off to prison, while these gentlemen of the Press are to be permitted to talk exactly as they like ! It is an absurd contradiction. Now they are being made to pay the penalty of their verbal extravagances. Nothing could be more proper. There must not be two sets of weights and measures.

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On the freedom of thought and of speech I hold a theory quite different from that of certain writers and professors who, in their books or their lecture-rooms, are pleased to attack the régime which has been chosen by the country. It is, in my opinion, the fact of this choice having been made by an immense majority of the Nation, that ought to place the Head of the State and his acts beyond discussion or question. Nobody ought to infringe in this respect a rule which should be obligatory upon all. A Michelet, a Quinet, a Mickiewicz (this last, a foreigner), a Deschanel, a Jules Simon or a Challemlacour maintain that it is allowable to convert a University into a hot-bed of principles hostile to the Government. They have had their mouths closed ; they are reduced to impotence. It is well. They ought not to be allowed to be exceptions to the general rule, merely because their names are well known, because they have written valuable books, or because their teaching attracts numerous pupils. I hold that, the more talent a man has, the more he is bound to place it at the disposal of his country. Well then, the country, which has formally determined on a line of action, cannot permit a few writers of books and articles, or a few teachers, to organize a campaign against itself, or (what comes to exactly the same thing) against the man whom it has chosen as its head.

I do not think my theory an unreasonable one. The whole course of the year 1852 has proved what are the

wishes of the country, and I am of those who wish what the country wishes. I was present the other day at the sale of Victor Hugo's furniture. The exile—is he really an exile?—let the things which had adorned his rooms in Paris, and which he could not carry away, be put up to auction. Victor Hugo is a man who calculates the effects of his actions. He reckoned that the carriage of these goods to a foreign land would have cost more than he valued them at; accordingly he submitted them to the auctioneer's hammer. Some of his friends shed tears before going to the sale. Sentimentality! Hugo knew very well what he was about. But this sale was for him as great an act of sacrilege as when the soldiers threw dice for the possession of Christ's robe. This illustration has been employed by the newspapers which Vacquerie controls, and the romanticists have reaped an aftermath of success.

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It was evident that those triumphal arches under which Louis Napoléon passed from the Place Malesherbes to the Élysée pointed the way to Empire. Now he has arrived at it. One single year has sufficed for him to reach that goal which we already foresaw at Arenaberg, though still in the far distance. Ah! when I see the successive stages of the road which has been travelled unroll themselves beneath my eyes, how firmly do I believe in destiny! The Prince has always had an absolute confidence in it. He knew that fortune, even when she subjected him to checks that were but tests of his mettle, would end by making him enter the Tuileries, as he had had the presentiment at Ham that he would do one day. Even at Strassburg and Boulogne, when his plans had been frustrated, he had no doubt as to what would be the concluding strain of the epic. People around me kept repeating: "He is a visionary"; but I replied: "No; he is a far-seeing man who is revolving in his brain projects in the realization of which he has the most complete faith; he listens to an inward voice which bids him go forward." He *has* gone forward; he knew



whither he was going, and he has arrived there. It has pleased people to accuse him of having but one fixed idea. It is true that he had an absolute belief in the return to the Imperial régime, and was convinced that this régime was the only one capable of saving France. He knew beforehand that his hour would come, waited in the certitude that it would strike ; and when it struck, he was not taken by surprise, because it was a fact foreseen, written in the decrees of fate and in the hearts of the masses, where none could read it more clearly than himself. He has held a perfectly just conception of what constitutes the happiness of a country that thirsts for glory, is eager for prosperity, and greedy for grandeur. He has had but to yield to his mission, in order to be carried to supreme power ; he has now attained to it ; and, as he said to me in London, he can adopt the Dutch motto : "I will maintain !"

I can answer for him as regards the future. If circumstances do not betray him, if he is able to resist the influences by which he is surrounded—I have warned him of this danger more than once,—his reign will be one of the most glorious that have ever been known. I am too well acquainted with his character not to feel persuaded that he will prove successful in his task. Only, I should wish him not to be too ready to lend an ear to all his advisers. I am aware that he is a good judge of men, and knows how to manage them, but, all the same, I sometimes fear the consequences of their association with him.

"No, my dear d'Ambès," he has often said to me, "I cannot, and will not, hate anybody ; do not urge me to get rid of so-and-so. I am content to watch his game, as one follows the movements of a piece on the chess-board. I have reckoned up in my mind each of those who move in my orbit. That is the way to learn who are likely to be a help or a hindrance to me, to estimate them at their proper value, to employ them at the fitting moment. There is in every man—unless you are dealing with idiots—some useful quality, and good statesmanship consists in discovering that quality. All around me projects are being formed, expounded, developed ; one man



will say to me 'Don't do that'; another, 'Choose this side rather than the other.' I take note and I reflect, and, consequently, I never come to any sudden determination. That is the whole art of politics. Believe me, I have studied it to its depths, and when occasion requires, I know how to decide."

He has proved that he does. Another thing he said :

"Any one who wants to command must begin by making friends and giving his mind to keeping them. Friendships demand sacrifices. My rule is not to shrink from making those sacrifices."

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I had a conversation of another sort a few days ago with one of the militant spirits of journalism. His modesty would be distressed at my mentioning his name, but I may say that he has followed with a calm and reflective judgment the causes and the effects of recent events.

"It must not be lost sight of," said he, "that ever since the beginning of 1851 we have been confronted with the absolute necessity of coming to a definite determination. It was necessary either to allow the threatening storm to burst, or to conjure it away. Louis Napoléon came to the resolution which circumstances dictated to him. He saw that the salvation of the country demanded an energetic resolve, an appeal to the country itself, a decision given by those who were the most interested in the result. He considered that the Assembly, drawn first in one direction, then in another, by its internal dissensions and conspiracies, did not after all faithfully reflect the national will, and that he must consult that national will alone in order to learn from the Nation itself how it desired to be governed. In these circumstances, what is called the *Coup d'Etat* was only a necessary act of vigour, expected by the country, desired by her, and accomplished by her.

"It must never be forgotten *how* Louis Napoléon has arrived at supreme power, that it was not the result of any

perfidious manœuvre or of the application of any undue pressure ; but that France, by giving him the majority at the Presidential elections, chose him because she thought him the man most capable of holding her destinies in his hands. A contract was entered into between France and him. Up to the 2nd of December that contract was in force. Who was it that desired to tear it up? The Assembly, and the factions of which it consisted—Legitimists, Orleanists, *Montagnards*, and the adherents of Cavaignac or Changarnier. In spite of what they say, Louis Napoléon remained loyal to his oath. He had many opportunities, long prior to the 2nd of December, of breaking it, and, if he refrained from doing so, it was because he always regarded himself as the trustee of the country. In January 1849, and again on the 13th of June in the same year, he might have proclaimed himself Emperor without encountering opposition. He knew that France desired the restoration of the Empire, but he waited and preserved strictly the Republican form of Government. On the 2nd of December he merely yielded to the mission which France imposed upon him. The event of the 2nd of December was not an act planned in silence and darkness ; it was not a *coup d'état*, but a seizing of the helm, the act of the pilot who sees the vessel running on the rocks, and with a vigorous turn of the rudder steers her into safety."

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The journalist fell silent. I grasped his hand. We were both of the same mind.

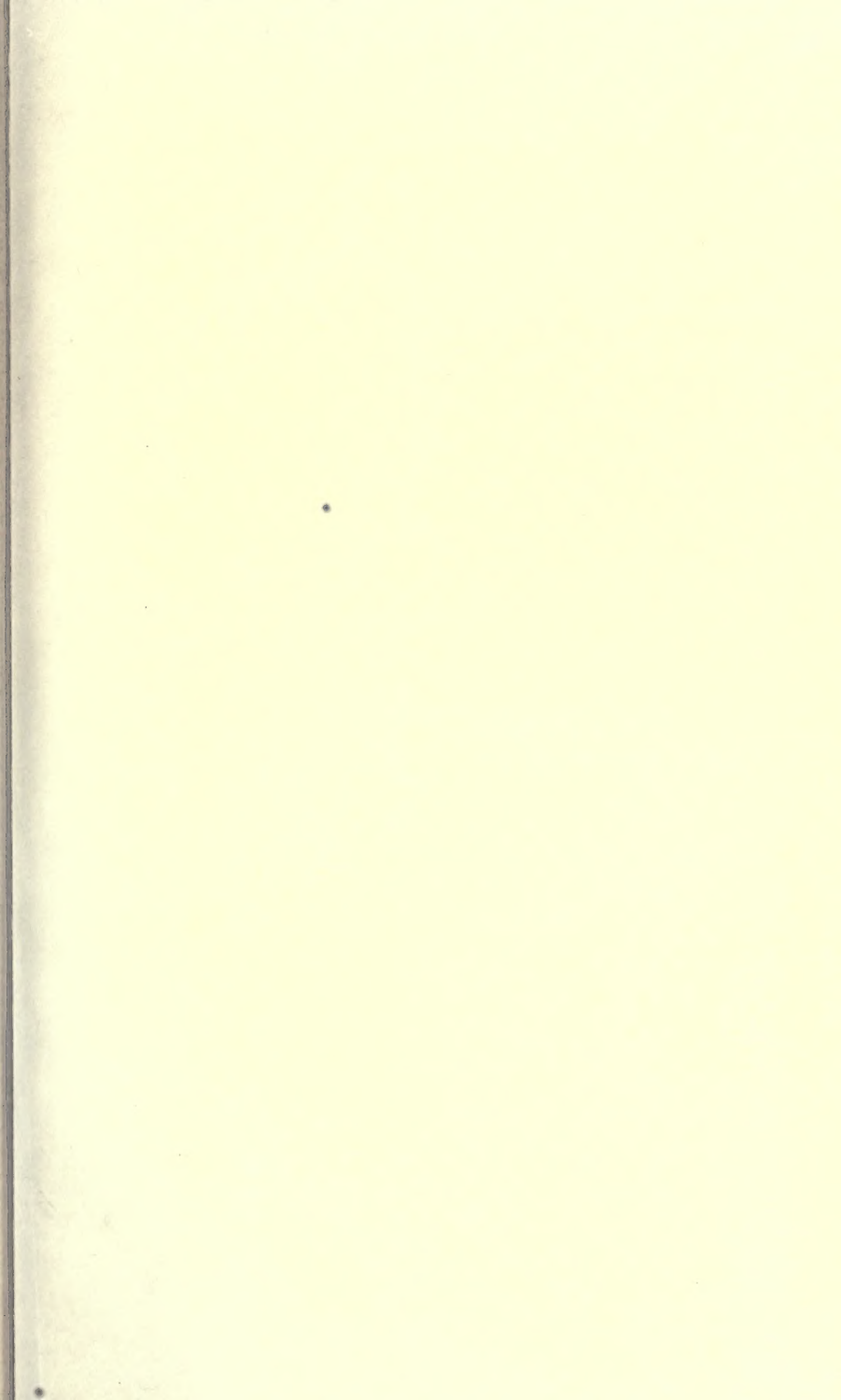
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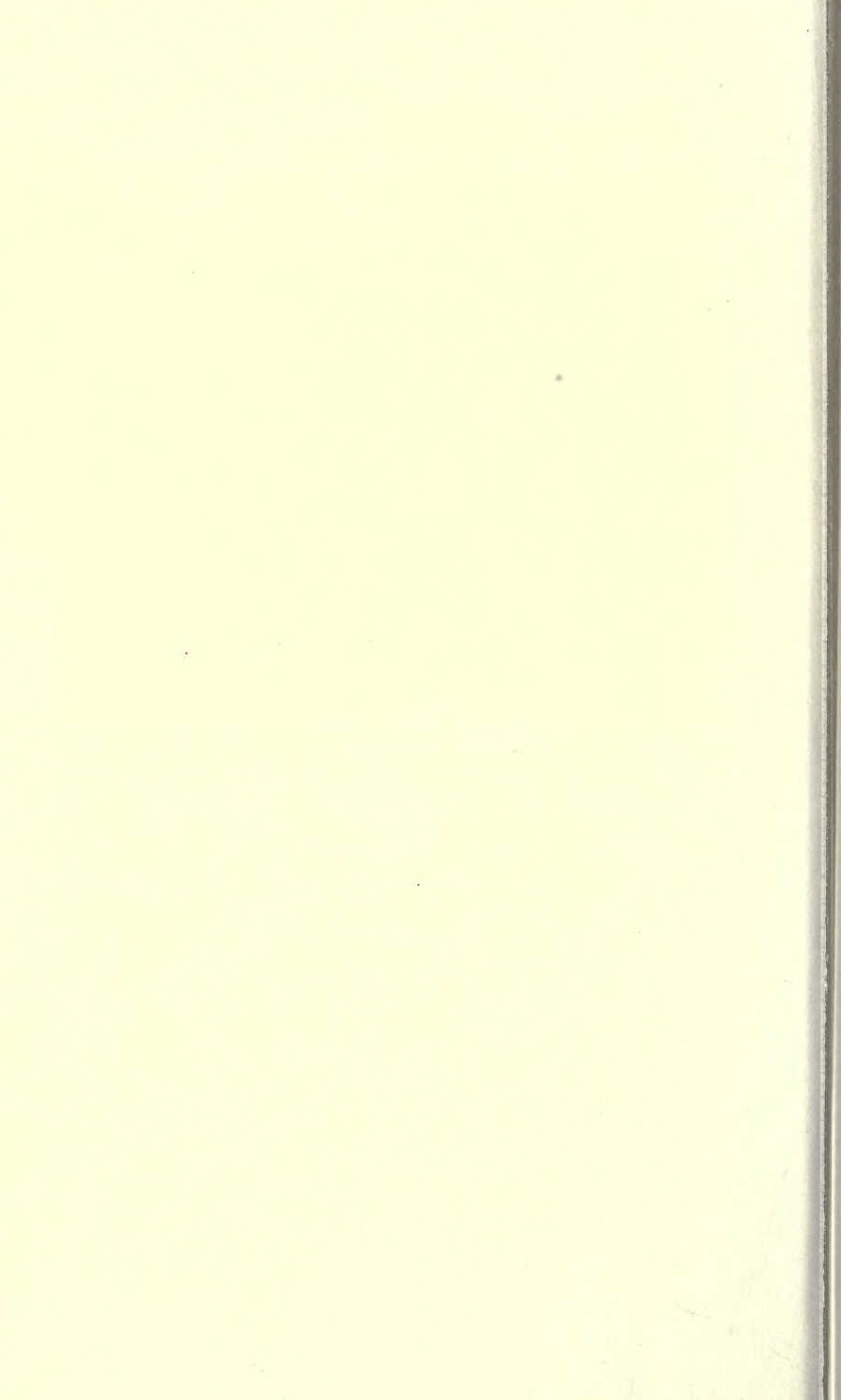
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